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THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

Seventy-five years have passed since Lingard completed his HISTORY OF ENGLAND, *which ends with the Revolution of* 1688. *During that period historical study has made a great advance. Year after year the mass of materials for a new History of England has increased; new lights have been thrown on events and characters, and old errors have been corrected. Many notable works have been written on various periods of our history; some of them at such length as to appeal almost exclusively to professed historical students. It is believed that the time has come when the advance which has been made in the knowledge of English history as a whole should be laid before the public in a single work of fairly adequate size. Such a book should be founded on independent thought and research, but should at the same time be written with a full knowledge of the works of the best modern historians and with a desire to take advantage of their teaching wherever it appears sound.*

The vast number of authorities, printed and in manuscript, on which a History of England should be based, if it is to represent the existing state of knowledge, renders co-operation almost necessary and certainly advisable. The History, of which this volume is an instalment, is an attempt to set forth in a readable form the results at present attained by research. It will consist of twelve volumes by twelve different writers, each

of them chosen as being specially capable of dealing with the period which he undertakes, and the editors, while leaving to each author as free a hand as possible, hope to insure a general similarity in method of treatment, so that the twelve volumes may in their contents, as well as in their outward appearance, form one History.

As its title imports, this History will primarily deal with politics, with the History of England and, after the date of the union with Scotland, Great Britain, as a state or body politic; but as the life of a nation is complex, and its condition at any given time cannot be understood without taking into account the various forces acting upon it, notices of religious matters and of intellectual, social, and economic progress will also find place in these volumes. The footnotes will, so far as is possible, be confined to references to authorities, and references will not be appended to statements which appear to be matters of common knowledge and do not call for support. Each volume will have an Appendix giving some account of the chief authorities, original and secondary, which the author has used. This account will be compiled with a view of helping students rather than of making long lists of books without any notes as to their contents or value. That the History will have faults both of its own and such as will always in some measure attend co-operative work, must be expected, but no pains have been spared to make it, so far as may be, not wholly unworthy of the greatness of its subject.

Each volume, while forming part of a complete History, will also in itself be a separate and complete book, will be sold separately, and will have its own index, and two or more maps.

The Political History of England

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

EDITED BY WILLIAM HUNT, D.LITT., AND
REGINALD L. POOLE, M.A.

V.

THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM THE ACCESSION OF HENRY VII. TO THE DEATH OF HENRY VIII.

1485-1547

THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM THE ACCESSION OF HENRY VII. TO THE DEATH OF HENRY VIII.

(1485-1547)

BY

H. A. L. FISHER, M.A.

FELLOW AND TUTOR OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD

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Vol. V

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Vol. XII. 1837 to 1901. By Sidney Low, M.A., Balliol College, Oxford, formerly Lecturer on History at King's College, London.

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(At the End of the Volume.)

1. (*a*) The battle of Flodden.
   (*b*) The French and Flemish borders.
2. Part of England to illustrate the Pilgrimage of Grace.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST TUDOR.

THE man who had been saluted king "in a kind of military election or recognition" upon the field of Bosworth on August 22, 1485, was twenty-eight years of age. A life of plots, adventures, and escapes had made him wary and supple; he had known what it was to ride for his life in the habit of a serf across the Breton border; to consort with fugitives and exiles, sharing in their hatreds and their hopes, in their attempts to descry hidden currents of feeling, in their calculus of perilous chances and watchful expedients. He had intrigued and begged, sailed and marched, fought and won. A sense of the treachery of men and things was in his blood. But he looked at life shrewdly, coolly, and a little whimsically, like a man of intellect as he was; and in the workings of his alert and pithy wit there was nothing world-weary or bitter. The problem which lay before him might well have daunted a nature less tenacious and self-possessed. A generation of civil war had bred a restless and warlike temper in the people of England. The Yorkist faction was still strong, especially in the north; the nobles were still encompassed by bands of armed retainers; gangs of wild men, their faces painted or vizored, hunted by night and day in parks, forests, and warrens, and in some parts of the country had utterly exterminated the deer. Murders were frequent and seldom prosecuted: "There is no country in the world," wrote a Venetian visitor, "where there are so many thieves and robbers as in England; in so much that few venture to go alone in the country excepting in the middle of the day and fewer still in the towns at night, and least of all in London".[1] Under the custom of livery and main-

CHAP. I.

[1] *A Relation of the Island of England* (Camden Society, 1847), p. 34.

CHAP. I. tenance and the stress of the civil war the old judicial and police system of England had broken down. The judges indeed still went on circuit, but the juries were intimidated by the local landlord and could not be relied upon to do their duty. The justices of the peace still held their petty and their quarter sessions, but they neglected their administrative duties and failed to enforce law and order. We hear complaints that the coroners omitted to view the body of a slain man, because no fee was attached to the duty, and consequently murder passed by not only unpunished but even unprosecuted.

The cause of all these social evils is not difficult to find. It was the dynastic quarrel between the houses of York and Lancaster. It was this quarrel, so sterile of ideas and principles, and so prolific of sporadic anarchy, which had been the curse of England, breeding as it did spies and counterspies, plots and counterplots, and giving to the actors on the stage of politics those nervous and treacherous characteristics which are the product of a violent and unscrupulous age. To eliminate this cause of faction from English political life was therefore the prime object of Henry's policy, as indeed it was the greatest object which an English statesman could then pursue. And in the search for peace and order Henry was compelled to bring into play all the resources of a statesman. It was not merely a problem of police, though that was an element; it was not merely a military problem, though there was destined to be some hard fighting before the end was attained. The struggle of the Roses had disorganised England, and all the functions of government had to be restored to their normal conditions. There was solid administrative work to be done as well as harsh cautery. Nor could the object be obtained merely by attending to the condition of England itself. The bulk of the Anglo-Irish lords were devoted to the cause of the White Rose; they remembered, or they had heard from their fathers, how, in 1459, Richard, Duke of York, had come to Dublin as viceroy, had ruled with singular clemency and moderation, and in defiance of the Lancastrian government had declared the right of Ireland to an independent parliament and independent coinage. They remembered how one of Richard's sons, the Duke of Clarence, had been born in Ireland and had held office there; and how Irish blood had been freely spilt in the Yorkist cause at Wake-

field. So long as the powerful family of the Geraldines was inclined to the Yorkist cause, Henry would have trouble in Ireland; and in settling the foundations of his rule in the home counties, he would be forced to devise some plan for maintaining the loyalty of his Irish subjects. Inextricably interwoven with the affairs of England was the problem of Ireland, shrouded in her western mists, and still hardly descried by English rulers; and Henry was compelled to handle the problem somehow. What he did stood for nigh 300 years. It was as if a boat were drifting away from the big ship at night when a rope is thrown, and the two are grappled together, and so pursue their midnight course with the surging waves and blinding spray between them. CHAP. I.

Nor was Ireland the only external element in the situation. The Yorkist party had in Margaret, the Dowager-Duchess of Burgundy and the sister of Edward IV., a leader of inexhaustible zeal. This lady had been brought up in the atmosphere of the great faction. Her father had been slain when she was fourteen, her elder brother had been once driven from his throne, her younger brother had lost his crown and his life, and the accession of Henry VII. not only meant to her the triumph of all that she had been taught to hate, but also the loss of part of the dowry which had been settled upon her by Edward IV. She was now forty years of age, and her court at Malines was a natural centre of Yorkist disaffection. The machinations of Margaret reacted upon the policy of the English. So long as the Yorkists obtained support in a foreign capital, Henry was compelled to seek countervailing alliances. The consciousness that his title was weak only made a system of foreign alliance the more obvious necessity. It was not only necessary to be soldier and administrator; the situation was one which required the amplest resources of diplomacy as well.

The new king's title was ambiguous. He was regarded as the head of the Lancastrian house, for his mother, Margaret Beaufort, was lineally descended from John of Gaunt. The Beauforts, however, had sprung from an unlawful union between John of Gaunt and Catharine Swynford, and though they had been declared legitimate without any qualification by an act of parliament passed in the reign of Richard II., a clause had been inserted into the confirmation of their patent during the succeeding reign which debarred them from the

CHAP. I. throne of England.[1] To have pressed an hereditary claim which was open to an objection of this nature might have been unwise, especially as Henry relied upon Yorkist support, and while still an exile in Brittany had received assurance of help on the strength of an undertaking that he would marry Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward IV., and unite the blood of the Red and the White Rose. But this marriage was yet to take place; and secret rumours flying about the country that one or both of the sons of Edward IV. were living, continued to nourish the hopes of the Yorkists. Acting, as Bacon says, "upon a settled disposition to depress all eminent persons of the line of York," Henry sent to the castle of Sheriff Hutton in Yorkshire to secure the persons of the Lady Elizabeth, and of Edward Earl of Warwick, the nephew of the late king and the son and heir of George Duke of Clarence. Edward, a lad of ten years of age, was brought to London, and imprisoned in the Tower, an act of politic cruelty which it is impossible to approve and difficult to condemn.

The king then proceeded by easy stages to the capital. The lord mayor and the aldermen of the city in robes of scarlet, the sheriffs with their servants clad in uniforms of tawny, and 435 representatives of the London crafts and mysteries, rode out to welcome their new sovereign. A blind poet from Toulouse, Bernard André, stood in the road and sang his Latin sapphics to the son of the learned Margaret. The standards which had floated over the victorious host at Bosworth, the first emblazoned with the figure of St. George, the second with the red dragon of Cadwallader, and the third with a dun cow, were solemnly placed in St. Paul's. A *Te Deum* was sung in honour of the mercies received, and then Henry retired to the house of the Bishop of London, where a lodging was prepared for him. Here he renewed to his council the pledge he had already given, that he would marry the Lady Elizabeth, but the date must be of his own choosing. To have married Elizabeth at once would have implied that his right to the throne of England flowed from her and from her alone, and that the lawful stem of the Red Rose had been utterly rooted out and destroyed. Rather than countenance

[1] See vol. iv., 130, 218-19.

an impression of this kind Henry was resolved to delay his union. Not only must he be solemnly crowned, but parliament must put a seal upon his title before his nuptials with Elizabeth of York. On September 15 writs were issued for the summoning of the three estates. CHAP. I.

In the third week of September, while London was preparing for the coronation, a terrible pestilence descended on the city. It was evidenced, says Bacon, by no carbuncle, no purple or livid spot or the like, but by a copious and malodorous sweat, and from this characteristic it received the name of the English sweating sickness. So sudden and deadly was its assault upon weakly constitutions that men and women were struck down as they conversed in the streets. It slew two lord mayors of London in a week; it slew six aldermen; but it was observed that if a man could hold his own for twenty-four hours he was safe, and that the poor were more immune from attack than the rich. Near the end of October the disease, which may have been brought into England by the king's Norman mercenaries, departed as mysteriously and suddenly as it had come; but on four subsequent occasions—1508, 1517, 1528, 1551—it returned to desolate the country.[1] The vulgar concluded from this great and novel affliction that "the reign would be a hard one," and their prognostications were not far beside the mark. Nevertheless the king's coronation took place upon the appointed day and was accompanied by a sparing distribution of honours. Jasper, Earl of Pembroke, the king's uncle, became Duke of Bedford; Lord Stanley, his supporter, was created Earl of Derby, and Sir Edward Courtenay Earl of Devon. But the most significant act was the appointment of a body of archers or yeomen of the guard for the better security of the king's person, a device said to have been copied from France, where, as in Spain, the monarchy was gathering power.

Nor were other indications wanting that the new king intended to raise himself above the aristocratic factions which had been the curse of England. His council indeed contained

[1] C. Creighton, *A History of Epidemics in England*, vol. i., 237. Dr. Caius, who describes with professional minuteness the Shrewsbury epidemic of 1551, is inclined to believe that the disease was brought into the country by Henry's army (*Opera aliquot*, ed. 1556, p. 123).

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some noble names: there were Oxford, and Bedford, and Derby, and Devon; but its chief characteristic was the large preponderance in it of hardened and tested middle-class ability. There was the veteran John Morton, Bishop of Ely, who had served on Towton field and was now summoned from his Flemish exile to rivet victory on the old cause; there was Richard Fox, son of a Lincolnshire yeoman, a priest and a doctor of the canon law, who had made the acquaintance of the great rebel Henry ap Tudor in Paris, and had been found serviceable there; "vigilant men and secret," says Bacon, "and such as kept watch with him almost upon all men else".[1] Sir Reginald Bray, diplomatist, soldier, and architect, has left in the delicate tracery of Henry VII.'s chapel a permanent memorial of his taste. Sir Edward Poynings had led a rising against Richard III., and was destined to leave a mark upon Irish history. Another councillor, Richard Edgecombe, a Devonshire squire, had raised troops to join the Duke of Buckingham's rebellion, and had paid the common penalty of ill-success. He had been a proscript and an exile; first hiding in the woods of the Tamar valley and then like so many other Yorkists finding shelter and hospitality at the Breton court, until the turn of fortune came, and a knighthood on the field of Bosworth. Another of the Breton exiles to receive a place in Henry's council was Sir Richard Guildford, who had been attainted for raising rebellion against Richard III. in Kent. Appointed one of the chamberlains of the receipt of the exchequer and master of the ordnance and the armoury, Guildford was one of Henry's most valuable servants. It was a council of useful talents rather than of ornamental names, and largely composed of men whose loyalty had been tried and whose spirit had been tested by the searching wind of adverse fortune.

Parliament met on November 7 at Westminster. It has been the fashion to represent the sixteenth century in England as an age of monarchical government, and to speak of the Tudor despotism almost as if the old constitutional mechanism of England had been reduced to a shadow. It is true enough that parliaments were summoned less regularly under the Tudor than under the Lancastrian sovereigns, and that the crown was

[1] *History of King Henry VII.*, ed. J. R. Lumby, p. 19.

frequently at pains to influence not only the composition but also the deliberations of the legislature. It is true that the country squires, the recorders and aldermen of the country towns, who came to these parliaments possessed little general information upon affairs of state, and were for the most part content to accept the guidance of the crown and the lords of the council through the political mysteries. But the survival of parliamentary government in England in an age which witnessed the eclipse of representative institutions throughout Western Europe is in itself a fact of great significance. These English parliaments kept alive all the forms and something of the spirit of political liberty. If their outlook upon the field of general politics was narrow, the interest of the members in local affairs was close and keen. The drafting of bills might be left to the lords of the council; the direction of foreign policy might safely be entrusted to the princely wisdom of the sovereign; but wherever there was an organised trade interest then the members concerned in that interest would advance it so far as they might in parliament. Statutes would be passed regulating the most trivial details and in protection of the most restricted and local interests. The legislation was piecemeal and as it were haphazard, corresponding to the desultory impact of local opinion; and in this there is no cause either for surprise or regret. A consistent application of general principles to the complex life of the nation could not be expected from a miscellaneous body of lawyers, country gentlemen, and tradesmen, who lived in an age when printed books were still extremely rare, newspapers non-existent, parliaments brief and intermittent, and the boundaries between class, trade, and locality more sharply defined than they are at present. Grievances can only be generalised when large bodies of men feel that they are bound together by an intercommunity of interests, and have received some training in political conceptions. But neither of these conditions was realised in England during the reign of the first two Tudors, and the sectional legislation of the Tudor parliaments is the best evidence of the fact that those bodies represented English society in all its picturesque diversity of structure and aim. If parliament had ever ceased to be a machine for suppressing a local nuisance, it would have run a great danger of ceasing to be a machine for creating or suppressing anything at all.

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The Chancellor, Thomas Alcock, Bishop of Worcester, preached the opening sermon. He spoke of Agrippa, who had stilled sedition in Rome, of the belly which warred with its members, of the mutual duties of subject and men. As the end of both king and subject is to produce wax and honey, wax for divine worship, honey for the use of man; so every human council and parliament must try to contribute to the praise of God and the Church, and to human utility. The silver, the brazen, and the iron age were passed. "Let us," said the preacher, "obtain the golden age, especially since a propitious God has sent us a second Joshua, a strenuous and invincible fighter, who, raising us from the depths of misery, will attempt with all his might to correct or else to pluck out the wicked." On the next day committees were appointed, according to ancient custom, to receive and to try petitions, and the house of commons proceeded to the election of a speaker. Its choice, which may have been prompted from above, fell upon Thomas Lovell, a trained lawyer, and a member of the king's council, who, having been attainted in the first parliament of Richard III., had fled oversea to Brittany, and fought on Bosworth field. On November 9 Henry came down to the house, accepted Lovell's election, and three days afterwards appointed him to the post of chancellor of the exchequer. In a brief speech delivered to parliament he declared that he was the rightful king both by inheritance and by the judgment of God as exhibited in the field of battle, and that all should be protected, save such as had offended his royal majesty. These were to be punished in the court of parliament now sitting.

The highest wisdom would probably have consisted in the most complete clemency, but complete clemency was not in the nature of the times. After the attainders passed in the reign of Richard III. against Henry's party had been reversed, an act of attainder was passed against the late king and his adherents, and, that colour might be given to the proceeding, the reign of Henry VII. was made to begin on August 21, the day before the battle of Bosworth. The Duke of Norfolk, and his son, the Earl of Surrey, Lord Lovell, Lord Ferrers, Lord Zouch, and twenty-three knights, were declared guilty of high treason, and their property forfeit to the crown. The act was

not passed without opposition. "There were many gentlemen against it, but it would not be, for it was the king's pleasure," wrote Sir Thomas Betanson to Sir Robert Plumpton.[1] It is possible that this opposition was not without its effect, for not only was the act accompanied by "many just and temperate savings and provisions," excepting for instance from forfeiture lands held in the right of wives or to the use of non-attainted persons, but a general pardon was soon afterwards issued to such of Richard's followers as should submit and swear fealty within forty days. The reversal of the attainders of such of Henry's followers as happened to be members of parliament was held by the judges to be a prerequisite to their taking their seats. This principle, however, was not extended to the person of the king. It was held that Henry was already freed from outlawry by reason of the fact that he had taken upon him the supreme authority. His title was not argued; it was assumed. A simple act was passed to the effect that "the inheritance of the crowns of the realms of England and France . . . rest remain and abide in the most royal person of our new sovereign lord King Henry VII. and in the heirs of his body lawfully coming". A discreet silence was observed as to the precise process by which Henry had attained or deserved his crown. It was enough that he was already the *de facto* king. CHAP I.

Having obtained a parliamentary confirmation of his title Henry had gained his chief purpose. But it was almost equally essential that parliament should secure him a suitable revenue. Tunnage and poundage were granted for life for the defence of the realm and specially for the "safeguard and keeping of the sea". An act of resumption restored to the crown all the lands which had belonged to Henry VI. on October 2, 1455, save only in exceptions duly specified, and this huge present was augmented by the confiscated property of the king's attainted enemies. But in making these grants parliament was far from surrendering its right of financial criticism or control. A clause was inserted in the tunnage and poundage act stating that the rates were not to be taken in ensample to the kings of England in time to come, and the act of resumption was possibly assisted in its passage by the feeling that the more revenue the

[1] *Plumpton Correspondence*, ed. T. Stapleton, p. 49.

CHAP. I. king derived from his lands, the less he would require from parliament. Finally the commons protested against the perennial abuse of purveyance. They said that food and cattle were constantly requisitioned for the use of the royal household, for which the owners received no adequate compensation. Economic instincts were strong in the Tudor race, and Henry, to meet the grievances of the commons, devised a scheme of appropriation which was accepted by both houses. A sum of £14,000 derived from land and custom dues was to be allocated every year to the needs of the king's household, and an annual assignment of £2,105 19s. 11d. was made to the wardrobe. The revenues of the king's household were thus severed from the revenues of the state, and at the same time much was done to make the new monarchy popular with the nation.

On November 19 the king came down to Westminster, and in his presence an oath was administered to several notable knights and squires of the household, and then, after they had retired, to the lords and commons in parliament assembled. They swore that they would never receive or aid murderers, felons, or outlaws, that they would retain no man by indenture or oath, or give livery, sign, or token contrary to the law, or make any maintenance, embracery, riot, or unlawful assembly, or impede the execution of any of the king's writs, or let any man to bail knowing or deeming him to be a felon. Lords and commons took the oath, but the house of lords was singularly attenuated. On this occasion there were only forty-eight members present: one archbishop, twelve bishops, seventeen abbots, two dukes, eight earls, one viscount, and seven barons. The spiritual outnumbered the temporal lords by more than two to one. The first session concluded with a scene of solemn and politic artifice. On December 10, the commons appeared before the king in the house of lords and implored him through the mouth of their speaker to marry the Lady Elizabeth. No sooner had Lovell concluded than the lords rose from their seats and standing before the throne with bowed heads repeated the request. The king replied that he was willing to act as they desired, and the chancellor then prorogued parliament till January 23. The members, especially such as were justices of the peace, were exhorted in a valedictory address to punish homicides, larcenies, murders, rapes, and extortions, and

in particular to chastise valiant beggars who under colour of begging were running about the country disseminating discords and lies. There can be no doubt that the oath against maintenance and livery was viewed with dislike by many of the great lords of parliament, but outside observers judged otherwise and saw in Henry's dealings an earnest of strong and methodical government. "The king," wrote de Gigli, collector of Peter's Pence to Innocent VIII., "shows himself very prudent and clement; all things appear disposed towards peace, if only the minds of men would remain constant."[1] CHAP. I.

Henry had been studiously economical in his drafts upon the liberality of parliament; but he had borrowed money in France towards his expedition and had left the Marquis of Dorset and Sir John Bourchier in Paris as sureties for his debt. He now turned to the city of London for a loan of 6,000 marks to enable him to meet this obligation. The comfort and opulence of London at this time were such as to impress foreigners who were familiar with the splendour of Italian cities. Especially remarkable was the wonderful quantity of wrought silver. "In one single street," says a Venetian traveller, "named the Strand, leading to St. Paul's, there are fifty-two goldsmiths' shops so rich and full of silver vessels great and small that in all the shops in Milan, Rome, Venice, and Florence put together, I do not think there would be found so many of the magnificence that are to be seen in London."[2] But London, despite the wealth of its goldsmiths, was only prepared to contribute £2,000, and of this sum near one-half was contributed by the three most important city companies, the mercers, grocers, and drapers.[3]

The long-expected marriage was celebrated on January 18, 1486, but as the country was still restless and the temper of the north especially uncertain, the king determined to compose the rebellious promptings of his subjects by a royal progress. Setting out upon his northern tour in the early part of March, Henry was honourably received at Cambridge, and then proceeded to Lincoln, where "he kept right devoutly the holy feast of Easter". Here he was apprised of disquieting news. Francis Lovell, the trusted friend of Richard III. and

[1] R. Brown, *Calendar State Papers, Venice*, i., No. 506.
[2] *Italian Relation of England*, p. 42. [3] Stow, Fabyan.

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the lord chamberlain of his household, had broken his sanctuary at Colchester, together with Humphrey and Thomas Stafford, and fled no one knew whither. As the king proceeded northwards the news became still more ominous. A rising was reported in Yorkshire between Ripon and Middleham, but the king's course was not to be stayed by tidings like these. Unarmed men from Lincolnshire were summoned hurriedly to his standard, and as the royal cavalcade marched from Doncaster to York it was swelled by the contingents of the loyal nobility. Before such a demonstration the rising, if rising there were, melted away like snow in summer, and the king entered his northern capital in triumph. A few years before the city of York had given a sumptuous welcome to Richard III., and the same artist who had devised the pageants on that occasion was now employed in contriving allegorical devices for the delectation of the man to whom Richard owed his dethronement and his death.

But despite processions and pageants York still numbered its zealots of the White Rose, and a design was set on foot to seize the king as he was celebrating the feast of St. George. The vigilance of the Earl of Northumberland foiled the conspiracy and provided victims for the gibbets, and as Lovell was approaching the city with a large force the Duke of Bedford was sent out to meet him with 3,000 light troops. Acting probably on the royal instructions, Bedford promised a free pardon to all who would lay down their arms, and the effect of this act of clemency was instantaneous. Feeling the pulse of his army to be weakening, Lovell suddenly fled from his camp by night and his men disbanded without an arrow loosed or a shot fired. The Staffords who had tried to seize Worcester were equally unsuccessful, and took sanctuary at Culham in Oxfordshire, where they hoped at least to save their lives. From their retreat they were drawn to the Tower, and since the court of king's bench held that the privilege of sanctuary did not cover high treason, Humphrey Stafford was put to death. Thomas received a pardon as having been led into error by his elder brother. Meanwhile the king was touring through the western counties and receiving assurances of loyalty from Worcester, Hereford, Gloucester, and Bristol. In June he was back again in London, and on September 20 a son was

born to him at Winchester. All things seemed to prosper for the new dynasty. The royal title had been confirmed by parliament, and the competing ambitions of the two lines had been merged in the royal marriage. Papal bulls had been obtained and published in confirmation of Henry's claim to the crown, a threatening cloud of conspiracy had been rapidly dispersed, and now an heir was born to the king and queen. The child was christened Arthur "in honour of the British race" from which the king was sprung, and the fairest hopes were conceived of his future. The blood of both the Roses ran in the boy's veins; he was the pledge of national unity and the symbol of the long-dreamed-of peace. CHAP. I.

Just as the ship of state seemed to be gliding into smooth waters, an ugly storm gathered in the sky. There was at Oxford a young priest, low-born but not unlearned, by name Richard Symonds. Of his antecedents and connexions we know nothing. We cannot say whether he was intimate with his Yorkist neighbour, the Abbot of Abingdon, nor whether his schemes were inspired by the heads of the Yorkist party, Lincoln and Lovell. We know only that he had a young pupil, by name Lambert Simnel, a boy of gentle nature and pregnant wit, the son of an Oxford tradesman, and that with this instrument he came within measurable distance of oversetting the throne of the Tudors. It appears that in the course of 1486 rumours were flying about England to the effect now that the sons of Edward IV. were still alive, and now that the Earl of Warwick, the son of Edward's brother, the Duke of Clarence, was murdered or about to be murdered in the Tower. It occurred to Symonds that in view of the fretful and credulous state of the public mind it might be possible to pass off Lambert as one of the princes who had been slain in the Tower. If Lambert became King of England, Symonds would become Archbishop of Canterbury, and with this gleaming prospect in view the tutor set himself to school his pupil in "royal habits and good arts". Soon afterwards a report spread that Warwick had died in prison. If Warwick was really dead, it would be less easy to disprove a counterfeit presentation of him. The *rôle* of Lambert was accordingly changed: he was henceforth to figure, not as Richard of York, but as Edward of Warwick, lately and wonderfully escaped

CHAP. I. from the Tower. But as the discomfiture of Lovell and the Staffords had dashed the courage of the English Yorkists, Symonds, acting probably upon instructions from the Earl of Lincoln, determined to launch the enterprise on the friendly soil of Ireland.

At no time probably since the Anglo-Norman invasion was the British hold upon Ireland so weak as during the later decades of the fifteenth and the earlier decades of the sixteenth century. The English Pale was little more than a strip of coast from Dublin to Dundalk, nowhere much more than thirty miles in width, and even in the Pale it had been impossible to expel the pervasive Irish dress, the pervasive Irish tongue, and the pervasive Irish customs. A few towns outside the Pale, of which Waterford was the most conspicuous, valued their commercial connexion with England, and had received important privileges from English kings. But the Anglo-Irish barons, who were descended from the Norman invaders, had assimilated all the characteristics of the native race. They had caught something of the Celtic fancy, and humour, and superstition, and they lived the wild and lawless life of the Celtic tribes. The quarrel of the two Roses had enlisted adherents among these rude baronial families, and as the Butlers sided with the house of Lancaster, so the Geraldines were enlisted in the cause of York. But while the Butler connexion had been weakened, owing to the fact that the elder branch of the family had settled in England, the influence of the Earl of Kildare, the head of the Geraldines, was exceptionally strong. Kildare was not only widely connected by marriage with the principal native families; he was himself lord-deputy, and his brother was chancellor; and though Henry went so far as to restore the outlawed Butlers to their rights, and to create his uncle Bedford lord-lieutenant of Ireland, he did not venture to deprive the Geraldines of their offices. Kildare was confirmed as lord-deputy, and Thomas Fitzgerald remained in possession of the great seal.

Henry's caution availed him nothing. Kildare and the Anglo-Irish lords examined Symonds and his protégé and decided to revive the claim of the White Rose. Almost all the great names of Ireland were enlisted in Simnel's cause, and messages were sent to obtain assistance from Margaret of

Burgundy and Sir Thomas Broughton, the chief of the Yorkist party in Lancashire. Sir Thomas Bodrugan, a noted Yorkist partisan, was invited to raise Cornwall and Devonshire for the cause. Henry was made aware of these machinations, and on February 2, 1487, held a meeting of the council in the Carthusian monastery at Sheen to devise methods of defence. A proclamation was issued announcing a general pardon to all who would reveal their offences and submit themselves by a certain day. It was then determined that the real Warwick should be taken from the Tower and shown to the people. But the most striking resolution of all affected the queen-dowager. She was "for various considerations" deprived of her widow's jointure, removed to the convent of Berdmondsey, and put upon a yearly income of 400 marks. Elizabeth Woodville was doubtless a silly and possibly a mischievous woman, and it may be that she had dabbled in the latest Yorkist plot. The explanation put forward to explain her sudden disgrace, that contrary to her explicit promise she had entrusted herself and her daughter to Richard III., was suspected and remains suspicious. "After her husband's death," writes Bacon,[1] "she was matter of tragedy, having lived to see her brother beheaded, and her two sons deposed from the crown, bastarded in their blood, and cruelly murdered. All this while, nevertheless, she enjoyed her liberty, state, and fortunes, but afterwards again, upon the rise of the wheel, when she had a king to her son-in-law and was made grandmother to a grandchild of the best sex; yet was she upon dark and unknown reasons and no less strange pretences precipitated and banished the world into a nunnery; where it was almost dangerous to visit her or see her; and where not long after she ended her life; but was by the king's commandment buried with the king her husband at Windsor."

From Sheen the king journeyed to London, and on the next day, a Sunday, the real Warwick was paraded from the Tower to St. Paul's and made to converse with such as were suspected of being concerned in the conspiracy. But the stratagem proved utterly fruitless. John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, the eldest son of the Duke of Suffolk, by Elizabeth,

[1] *History of King Henry VII.*, p. 29.

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sister of Edward IV., had been named successor to the throne by his uncle Richard III., and in view of Warwick's imprisonment Lincoln was the natural head of the Yorkist faction. The kindness of Henry was thrown away upon this ambitious and factious man, and immediately after the council at Sheen, at which he had been present, he fled oversea to Flanders. There he found his associate Lovell, and his kinswoman Margaret in the throes of preparation. That Lincoln was really deceived by the imposture is difficult of credence, but what did it matter, so long as the enterprise succeeded? If Henry were once down and dead, the son of the Oxford joiner could easily be "reduced to order," and Warwick might ascend the throne.

On May 5, 1487, Lincoln and Lovell and other prominent English Yorkists landed in Dublin accompanied by 2,000 German veterans equipped at the expense of Margaret, and commanded by a brave and tried soldier of fortune, Martin Swart. At this event the last disguises were thrown aside, and the movement passed from the hidden channels of conspiracy into open war. On the 24th, being Whitsunday, Simnel was crowned as Edward VI. in the cathedral of the Holy Trinity, Dublin, and the principal members of the Anglo-Irish colony, renouncing their allegiance to Henry VII., did fealty and homage to their new master. A parliament was convoked; coin was struck; proclamations were issued, and the writs ran in the name of Edward VI. The spiritual peers voted a subsidy for the purpose of procuring a reversal of any censures which they might incur by reason of their rebellion. In Dublin the Yorkist current flowed fresh and high, but in the south, where the Butler interest was strong, Henry still numbered adherents. The city of Waterford, whose mayor was a Butler, became the stronghold of the Tudor monarchy. Vassals of the house of Ormond, loyalists from Kilkenny, from Callan, from Clonmel, and from Fidderth streamed in to obtain the protection of its walls and to defy the hated Geraldines. So high did passion run, that Kildare hanged the groom who brought him the city's defiance, and his herald, rather than trust himself within the walls of Waterford, delivered his master's message from an open boat. But while Ireland was on the brink of civil war, the main enterprise went forward.

The German veterans, reinforced by crowds of ill-armed and ill-clothed Irishmen under the command of Sir Thomas Fitzgerald, crossed St. George's Channel, and on June 4, 1487, landed upon the coast of Lancashire. CHAP. I.

Henry had been advertised of the course of Irish affairs by one of his rare adherents in that country, the Lord of Howth, and many of the nobles of the south were in attendance on him at Coventry, when scouts stationed along the western coast brought the news that the enemy had landed. On the advice of Morton and Fox, a proclamation was issued against all the familiar forms of military indiscipline, and the royal army, thus fortified against popular odium, marched across England to Nottingham, where it received a welcome addition of 6,000 men. Meanwhile the motley host of Irish and Germans had experienced a series of disappointments. They had expected powerful aid in Lancashire, but Broughton could only rally a small company to their standard. Under the guidance of Lincoln they made their way towards York, imitating Henry in their careful avoidance of pillage, and hoping to enlist the active assistance of a county which was notoriously disaffected to the Red Rose. "Their snowball," however, "did not gather as it went," perhaps because, as Bacon says, "it was an odious thing for the people of England to have a king brought in to them upon the shoulders of Irish and Dutch,"[1] and perhaps also owing to the complete failure of Lovell's rising in the previous year. Finding the ridings sullen and passive, the insurgents turned their course southward, pushed through the forest of Sherwood, then extending as far south as Nottingham, in the intent to seize the famous fortress of Newark. They crossed the Trent at Fiskerton Ferry, some four miles south-east of their objective, and bivouacked on a hillside near the little village of Stoke. In the plain before them they could see the straight line of the Fossway running across their front north-east to Newark, but between them and the old Roman road lay the army of the king. At nine o'clock on the morning of the 16th Lincoln threw his army upon Henry's vanguard. The Irish with the sun in their faces, unprotected by breastplates, and armed only with darts and skeans, fought fiercely and suffered

[1] *History of King Henry VII.*, p. 35.

CHAP. I. desperately; but the main brunt of the conflict on the rebel side was borne by "Martin Swart and his merrie men," to use the title of a long-lost and much regretted ballad, and it was not until their leader had fallen and the contest had continued for three hours that the brave Germans turned and fled. Henry's victory, if hardly gained,—and it is said that he lost 2,000 men out of his "battle," the other two divisions either from timidity, disloyalty, or mismanagement failing to come into action,—was as decisive as victory can be.[1]

All the chief Yorkist leaders, Lincoln and Swart, Fitzgerald and Plunket, fell on the field, together with some 4,000 of the rank and file. Lovell and Broughton were never again heard of, and their fate has given rise to many conjectures. "The lad" and his mentor, Symonds, fell into the hands of the victors, and while the priest was condemned to pass the rest of his days in a dungeon, Lambert was treated with politic and humorous clemency. The mock king was set to turn the spit in the real king's kitchen. Some years afterwards a party of Irish lords were seated at a dinner at Henry's court. "A gentleman came and told them that their new king, Lambarte Simnel, brought them wine to drink and drank to them all." None would have taken the cup out of his hands, but bade the great devil of hell him take before even they saw him. "Bring me the cup if the wine be good," said the Lord of Howth, being a merry gentleman, "and I shall drink it off for the wine's sake and mine own sake also; and for thee as thou art, so, I leave thee, a poor innocent."[2] From scullion Simnel was promoted to be one of the king's falconers. His reminiscences would have been curious, but perhaps he was too sensitive to ridicule to give them freely. But Polydore Vergil, the historian, may have seen him and learnt something from his lips, for he was alive when the *History of England* was reaching its completion in 1534.[3]

When the last *Te Deum* had been sung in the cathedral of Lincoln in honour of the victory of Stoke, Henry addressed

[1] Molinet, the Burgundian chronicler, makes York go over to "Clarence," creates a panic in London and ascribes the victory of Stoke to the impact of the English arrow on half-armed Germans (*Chroniques*, iii., c. 158).

[2] Simnel would seem ultimately to have been transferred to the service of Sir Thomas Lovell; art. in *Dict. of Nat. Biogr.*

[3] Carew MSS., ed. Brewer and Bullen; *The Book of Howth*, p. 190.

himself to the serious task of pacification. He had given orders before the battle that Lincoln's life should be spared, hoping that he might learn from the Yorkist chieftain all the secrets of the plot. But Lincoln's lips were sealed for ever, and the king was thrown back upon clues less authoritative and less distinct than those with which the earl could have supplied him. There are some societies and some ages in which political movements are mainly determined by books or pamphlets; there are others in which the dominant force is public oratory. But the agencies by which seditious movements were set on foot in England during the reign of Henry VII. were far more impalpable and elusive than written treatises or spoken harangues to the mob. The rumour of the cottage and the manorial hall, the ill-informed chatter of groups in the village alehouse, on the green, or in the churchyard as the congregation dispersed, a word dropped in the hunting field, a scrap of ill-spelt clumsy writing carried by a rustic or a groom, such were the wayward instruments of sedition. In the north especially the danger was greatest, not only because the strength of the feudal families was there most considerable, but also for the refuge and assistance which might be afforded by the neighbourhood of Scotland. And all over England the arm of justice was paralysed by two great evils—benefit of clergy and the right of sanctuary. The respect paid to these institutions excited the surprise and criticism of foreigners. After every robbery, every murder, every conspiracy, and every revolt the guilty persons would flee to the nearest sanctuary and thence defy the law. By the benefit of clergy any person who could read was transferred to the milder jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts. CHAP. I.

In face of these difficulties imposed by the Church,—and Henry was too loyal a son of the Church to brush them aside,—it was impossible to clear the country rapidly of the virus of disaffection. A system of spies naturally grew up to meet a system of whispers, and was as odious and as inefficient as such systems always are. Henry, however, did everything which was possible to compose the restless spirit of the country and to restore law and order. In a leisurely progress through the northern counties the king made scrupulous inquiries, and visited his displeasure upon those who were connected with

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the recent troubles by fines and ransoms. From Newcastle an embassy was sent to James III. of Scotland to propose that the three years' truce which had been made in 1486 should now be converted into a lasting peace, and strengthened by no less than three marriage alliances. It was proposed that the King of Scotland should wed the English queen-dowager, and that his two eldest sons should marry two daughters of Edward IV. These proposals, though formally accepted on the Scots' side, were never carried into effect. James was already too sensible of his burden of unpopularity to add to its weight by entering upon so close a union with the hated Saxons. But the action of Henry is none the less highly significant. All through his reign he aimed at securing a lasting peace with Scotland, seeing in such an alliance a safe barrier against troubles at home. How fully he was justified in comprising the project of a Scottish alliance in the system of measures which, in the summer and autumn of 1486, he adopted towards the pacification of England will be made clear hereafter.

Henry arrived in London on November 3 to carry out the long-deferred coronation of the queen, and to open his second parliament. The police work in Yorkshire and the diplomatic work in Scotland were to be crowned by legislative work at Westminster. This parliament, which met on November 9, has made a great mark upon English history, for after passing a bill of attainder against the leaders of the late conspiracy, twenty-eight in number, it created the court which became so famous and popular, and then so notorious and unpopular, under the name of the Star-chamber. This tribunal, which under the house of Stewart became perverted into an instrument of political oppression, was in its initial conception a most necessary engine for the stamping out of disorder. Dignified and impressive in its composition—for it contained the chancellor, the treasurer, the keeper of the privy seal, a bishop and a temporal peer from the privy council, and the chief justices of the courts of king's bench and common pleas—it was created to deal with a class of offence which local juries and common law courts were too weak to suppress; with livery and maintenance, with rioting and illegal assemblies, with the bribery of jurymen, and the official delinquencies of sheriffs in the matter of the empanelment of juries and the return of verdicts.

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No new offences and no new penalties were created by the act of 1487. The misdemeanours specified as within the province of the new court were well known to the statute book, and powers as yet unrepealed had been given to the privy council to punish them. Nor can it be said that the composition or competence of the court was jealously confined by the terms of the act. A president of Magdalen, a dean of Windsor, a warden of Merton sat in the Star-chamber in 1495; and many offences unspecified in the statute, such as defamation, unlawful impounding, illegal tolls, and the like, were dealt with by a tribunal which generally numbered seven or eight bishops, as many members of the king's council as were available, and as many judges and lawyers as it might be deemed necessary from time to time to summon to the board. The importance of the new court is, as has been well said, not so much judicial as political. A great tribunal, lifted far above the reach of local terrorism, and empowered not only to issue writs of subpœna but also to examine defendants upon oath, had been created to deal with the offences of the great. Essentially popular and at the same time monarchical, the Star-chamber was destined to help in the great task of restoring the reign of law and order, which had been overset too long by the strength of the baronial families.[1]

In other ways also the government strove to put down crime and disorder. "A very just and honourable bull," dated August 6, was obtained from Innocent VIII., limiting the abuses which flowed from the right of sanctuary. The place might be watched by the king's officers in the case of treason, so that at the expiration of the forty days the traitor would fall into the hands of justice. The sanctuary was to afford no protection to the goods of a delinquent; and criminals who broke sanctuary to commit a second crime were liable to be haled out by the king's officers and to lose the right of sanctuary for ever after. At the same time a statute was passed to keep the coroners up to their duty, and to stimulate the pursuit and the prosecution of murderers. Truly it may be said that the revolt of Lambert Simnel had provoked great efforts towards the restoration of the rule of law.

Decisive though the victory of Stoke had been, it did not

[1] I. S. Leadam, *Select Cases in the Star-Chamber* (Selden Soc.), Introd.

CHAP. I. at once put an end to Yorkist disturbances in Ireland. Five months after the battle the citizens of Waterford, whose privileges had been renewed and augmented, were informed by the king that the Earl of Kildare and the city of Dublin still adhered to their seditious opinions. Henry authorised the men of Waterford to arrest and seize rebels by sea and land and to intercept all merchandise destined for Dublin, until Kildare and the inhabitants of Dublin "with the parties thereabouts of the Sequele, should utterly and clearly leave and forsake their rebellion and contemptuous demeanour and be of good and due obedience". But with the resources at his disposal it would have been alike futile and impolitic for Henry to proceed against Kildare. The number of persons in the English Pale who had not embraced the cause of Simnel could be numbered on the fingers of one hand, and a vindictive policy would have driven the whole Anglo-Irish colony into confederation with the native tribes. Accordingly, though the parliament of November attainted the English nobles and gentry who had fought at Stoke, the Irish rebels were passed over in significant silence. Meanwhile Kildare sent messengers to Henry to make his peace, while Dublin excused her infatuation on the ground of the bad example which had been set to her by the lord-deputy, the archbishop, and the clergy. In politics it is folly ever to be implacable, and Henry was a politician. Sir Richard Edgecombe was despatched to Ireland to receive the homage and allegiance of all who would undertake to be faithful to the English king, and to deliver royal pardons for past offences. The aid of the pope had already been invoked against the insurgent clergy, and a bull of Innocent VIII. had directed Henry's clerical adherents in Ireland, the Archbishops of Cashel and Tuam and the Bishops of Clogher and Ossory, to make a secret inquiry into the conduct of the rebels and to forward a report to Rome. A bull excommunicating Henry's rebellious subjects, and papal briefs granting absolution from the spiritual penalties in which their disobedience had involved them, formed part of Edgecombe's diplomatic baggage, and thus equipped the ambassador of England set sail from Mount's Bay in Cornwall on June 23, 1488.

A voyage to Ireland was still something of an adventure. Pirates were reported off the coast of Scilly, and a Fleming

ship was in the Severn "daily taking and spoiling the king's subjects". Edgecombe's little flotilla, carrying on board 500 soldiers, stood first west and then east in the hopes of a brush with the rovers; but luck was against them, and there was nothing more to do but to pursue a straight course for Ireland. On the fourth day the *Anne* of Fowey and her three comrades put in at Kinsale. The object of the mission was prosperously accomplished. Kinsale was hospitable and submissive, and at Waterford the only fear was that the town might be exposed to the vengeance of the Geraldines. In Dublin after many "feigned unreasonable delays" on the part of the Irish lords, and some "plain and sharp" speaking on the part of the English agent, Kildare and his followers agreed to submit to the King of England. Extending his right hand over the Host, the earl swore that he would never traffic with Margaret of Burgundy, or other enemies of King Henry, the natural and rightwise King of England, and that he would not hinder the execution of the censures of the Church against all who troubled him in his title to the crown of England or lordship of Ireland. The oath was repeated in the same form by the Irish lords, save that the ecclesiastics bound themselves in addition solemnly to promulgate in the churches the papal denunciation of the enemies of the King of England. All then proceeded to the church of the monastery of St. Thomas the Martyr. The Archbishop of Dublin intoned the *Te Deum*, and the church bells rang out gaily in honour of the peace. On the next morning the mayor, the bailiff, and the commonalty of Dublin were sworn in the Guildhall, and then Edgecombe proceeded upon a tour through Drogheda and Trim to receive the homage of the provincial colonists. Upon obtaining a certificate on oath together with a bond signed by his sureties, Edgecombe gave to Kildare the king's pardon under the great seal. It was the concluding act of his mission, and upon July 30 he put out to sea and headed for Fowey. The professions of loyalty he had so painfully extracted from the Anglo-Irish lords were but skin-deep, and the peace of Ireland, like that of the summer waters through which his keel was driving, was soon to be ruffled by boisterous weather.[1]

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[1] Edgecombe's interesting Journal has been printed in Harris' *Hibernica* and abridged by Ware, *Rerum Hibernicorum Annales*, pp. 15-22, and by Bagwell, *Ireland under the Tudors*, vol. i., 106-8.

CHAPTER II.

THE FRENCH WAR.

CHAP. II.

THE real interest of England lay, as the future was destined to show, in the development of her naval and commercial resources. That the War of the Roses had exercised a prejudicial effect upon the maritime position of Great Britain is only too likely, for we hear complaints that the English navy was decayed, and we find that much of the carrying trade of the Channel was now in the hands of the Spaniards, the Portuguese, and the Bretons. Everywhere English commerce was confronted with powerful competition. In the Baltic the Hanseatic league exercised its jealously guarded supremacy; in the Mediterranean trade was met by rivals from Barcelona and Marseilles, from Genoa and Pisa, from Florence and Venice. The trade with Iceland was broken; the trade with Norway and Denmark was ill-protected. It was only in the marts of Flanders that England still held a commanding position in virtue of her exports of cloth, and for this reason it was essential that the Burgundian house should keep on good terms with the sovereigns of England. But even the export trade in English cloth and woollen was largely carried on by foreign merchants in foreign bottoms. The privileges granted by Edward IV. to the Hanseatic league were still unrepealed; and German, Flemish, and Italian traders had a share in the distribution of British goods throughout the continent. Of oceanic adventure there was as yet little talk, save perhaps among Bristol shippers; yet it was from oceanic adventure that England was destined to become the first naval and the first colonial power in Europe. A few months after Henry's accession Bartholomew Columbus set sail for England to make a present of his brother's dreams to the English king.

Christopher had seen with his strategic, world-sweeping glance that if Spain would not help him to discover the new route to the Indies, England was the country which was most favourably situated to second his adventure. But Bartholomew was spoiled by pirates, and three years elapsed before he was in a position to attract Henry's attention. That a scheme so romantic, grandiose, and hazardous, propounded by a poor Genoese mariner and cartographer, should have been seriously considered by the King of England is a fact significant of the times and eloquent of the higher side of Henry's nature. Indeed an invitation was actually issued to Christopher Columbus to confer with the king, but there were delays and it came too late. The discoverer of America had practically completed his arrangement with the court of Spain; and it was not until the reign of Edward VI. that the passion for geographical discovery seized upon the English nation.[1] CHAP. II.

The expediency of non-intervention on the continent, save to procure advantages for English trade, and in particular the expediency of abandoning all idea of recovering the old French possessions, is clear to us now as we look back upon our history. All the forces which mould nations—geography, race, language, common memories, common suffering, a great literature—were making France a nation. The monarchy which had founded her institutions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which had rescued her in the English wars, had given her an army and enlarged her borders. Under Louis XI., Burgundy and Provence, Anjou and Maine, Bar and Picardy had been added to the possessions of the French crown, while on the Eastern Pyrenees the counties of Cerdagne and Roussillon had been given in pledge to the king in return for assistance granted in 1462 to Aragon against the rebellious Catalans. Brittany alone of the great French fiefs preserved her independence, and the struggle for Brittany was now to begin. Louis XI. had foreseen it, and before he died, in 1483, many of the noble families in Brittany were in receipt of regular pensions from the court of France.

Henry had been helped to the English throne by the subsidies of Anne of Beaujeu, the clever and prudent daughter of

[1] Navarrete, *Colleccion de documentos inéditos*, xvi., 485 ff.; Hakluyt, *Voyages* (ed. 1903), vii., 135-38; *Cambridge Modern History*, i., 22.

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Louis XI., who, with her husband Pierre carried on the government of France during the minority of her brother Charles VIII. The King of England knew Brittany and he knew Paris. He was aware that the regent had given him aid because Richard III. had trafficked with a disaffected party in Brittany and among the nobles of France. His position at home was too insecure to admit of his playing an adventurous or a brilliant *rôle* on the continent, even if he had wished to do so, and brain and temperament counselled quiescence. He made a truce for a year with the government of Anne, and renewed it as soon as it neared the time of expiration. The English nation was moved by two great political passions or prejudices, hatred of the French and hatred of the Scots. From Calais and the forts of the Pale English men-at-arms looked covetously on the plains of Picardy; and the captainship of Calais, the great outpost against France, was one of the most important and responsible offices in the gift of the crown. Although Normandy and Guienne had now been lost for more than thirty years, the King of England still retained the title of King of France, as though time would surely bring him once more to his own. Every occasion of embarrassment to the French government seemed to the ordinary Englishman to give a legitimate opening for interference in France; every increase of French power seemed to him to be a direct menace to England. The French regency was unpopular, for, as far as might be, Anne worked upon her father's lines, which were deeply resented by the nobility and by the princes of the blood; and in Louis of Orleans, next heir to the throne should Charles die without issue, young, hot-headed, chafing under his exclusion from power and a loveless marriage forced upon him by the old king, the malcontents found a formidable leader.

The frivolous strivings of this factious party, the *guerre folle* as it has been called, were in themselves of little import, but they were connected with a struggle of a more serious nature. The province of Brittany, so strongly marked in its characteristics, and so jealous of its autonomy, was nearing the term of its political independence. The last duke, Francis II., feeble alike in physique and intelligence, had no male heir, and on his death the duchy would pass to his daughters Anne and Isabel. A party in Brittany was determined at all costs

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to resist the incorporation of the duchy with France, but the cause of Breton independence, however defensible upon grounds of provincial and historic sentiment, was soiled by intrigue, venality and faction. The grand treasurer of the duchy, Pierre Landois, was the son of a tailor, and his conduct was marked by the overbearing manner and wide ambition of the successful upstart. In 1484 Landois summoned the Duke of Orleans to Nantes, promised him the hand of Anne, and entered into a league for the dismemberment of France with Richard of England and Maximilian of Austria. A knot of Breton nobles hated the treasurer, rose against him, hanged him on July 19, 1485, and then concluded a treaty with the government of Charles VIII. It was a hollow concord. The Breton nobles had been willing enough to accept French help against their mortal enemy, but they had no intention of sacrificing their nationality to France. The estates of Brittany in February, 1486, recognised the daughters of Francis as heiresses to the duchy, and arranged that they should respectively marry Maximilian and his son Philip. On March 15, 1486, the bargain was struck with Maximilian, then King of the Romans. The Dukes of Bourbon and Lorraine were to be drawn into the alliance. The Duke of Orleans, the Duke of Angoulême, a powerful Gascon noble, Alain d'Albret, were parties to the league in defence of the rights of Brittany.

A league more composite or more brittle could scarcely be imagined. Orleans, d'Albret, and Maximilian all wished to marry the same princess, then a girl of ten, though Orleans was already married, though d'Albret was lame, ugly, forty-five and the father of numerous bastards, and Maximilian was a widower of thirty-one. The Bretons distrusted the French princes, and liked too well the colour of the French government money. The struggle wavered fitfully through 1486 and 1487, but the advantage in the main lay with the regents, who recovered control of Gascony, invaded Brittany and took Vannes, while at the same time their capable general, Philip de Crèvecœur, Seigneur D'Esquerdes, took St. Omer and Thérouanne in Picardy and won a decisive victory over the troops of Maximilian at Bethune.

Still Henry remained quiescent. A French embassy brought congratulations on the victory of Stoke cleverly mingled with

CHAP. II. an apology for the Breton campaign. There were rebels and declared traitors in both countries, and Charles was only attempting to do in Brittany what Henry had already so successfully achieved in Nottinghamshire. The Breton campaign was not a war of conquest; it was a measure of police, defensive not offensive. While French nobles were parties to the Breton league, and Orleans was the life and soul of the defence of Nantes, there was a sufficient measure of truth in this contention. Henry determined to avoid war if possible, and to compose the quarrel: he signed a truce with Brittany; he sent envoys to Maximilian to arrange a peace and the renewal of the Flemish intercourse; his almoner, Christopher Urswick, crossed the sea to refresh the Anglo-French truce and to mediate a peace between the courts of Paris and Nantes. But this chilly and temperate dealing was by no means to the taste of some of the English nobility, and Edward Woodville Lord Scales, the queen's uncle and the governor of the Isle of Wight, prayed the king that he might be permitted to raise some volunteers for the rescue of the duchy. The request was refused, but perhaps in such a way as to suggest that disobedience would be condoned. Woodville crossed the Channel with 700 men and landed at St. Malo in May, 1488. Though English envoys were at Nantes, and Charles was pretending to treat with Orleans at Angers, both parties were girding themselves up for a final struggle. La Trémouille, a young general with an old head, destined to win fame in the Italian wars, cautious to a fault, but careless of no detail, was in command of the French army. His artillery was invincible; and town after town fell before him.

At last, on July 28, 1488, at St. Aubin du Cormier he fell in with the main Breton army, a motley host some 10,000 strong, including Germans and English, Spanish and Navarrese, in addition to the main body of native infantry. The English archers were placed in the vanguard, and 1,300 Bretons were made to wear the red cross of St. George upon their doublets in order to impress the foe with the size of the English contingent. The battle began with a cannonade, followed by a fierce encounter between the Swiss infantry in the pay of France and the Breton vanguard under de Rieux. But while in this portion of the field the Bretons, stiffened by the English

archers, held their ground, a German captain, seeking to avoid the fire of the French artillery, moved his men to one side, and the French cavalry, perceiving the gap, galloped through it, cut up the Breton rearguard, and then turned upon de Rieux. The weak Breton cavalry on the wings offered little assistance, and the defeat became a rout. Orleans, who fought on foot, because it had been rumoured in the camp the night before that the French princes would betray the cause, was taken in the field and sent to a dungeon. No quarter was given to the red cross of St. George, and Woodville and nearly all the English paid for their adventure with their lives. The army of Brittany was swept out of existence; the coalition with the French nobles was dissolved: it was the French pendant to the field of Stoke.[1] On August 20 a treaty was signed at Sablé between Francis and Charles. The Duke of Brittany acknowledged himself a vassal of the French crown; he placed St. Malo, Dinan, Fougères, and St. Aubin du Cormier in the hands of the French king as pledges; he promised to expel the foreign troops; he promised that Anne should not be married without Charles's consent. The French king in return for these concessions engaged to withdraw his army, saving the garrisons necessary to hold the towns which had been given him in pledge. On September 9 the duke died, leaving de Rieux as the guardian of his daughters. Charles at once claimed the wardship as feudal superior, and contended that Anne could not bear the title of Duchess of Brittany until the legal claim of France had been tested. It was clear that France intended to devour the Bretons, and Anne and de Rieux appealed to England for help.

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English blood had been shed in battle, and was England to look on quietly while the great and active sea-faring population of Brittany was being absorbed by the power of her ancient enemy? It was clear that Maximilian could give little aid for the present. From February 5 to May 16, 1488, he had been held a prisoner in Bruges, and having been released under

[1] Alain Bouchard, *Les Grandes Cronicques de Bretaigne*, bk. iv., p. 207; D'Argentré, *Histoire de Bretaigne*, p. 972 ff.; St. Gilles, *Les Grandes cronicques et Annales de France;* Polydore Vergil, pp. 577-79; Dupuy, *Réunion de la Bretaigne à la France*, pp. 124-27. Polydore gives Woodville about 400 men. The French authorities are more liberal.

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humiliating conditions, he was now attempting to restore his authority in Flanders. Henry was in no mood to go into the fray single-handed, and on July 14, he had renewed his truce with France; but meanwhile he was laying the basis for an anti-French coalition. South of the Pyrenees a new power of the first class had come into being as the result of the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon with Isabella of Castile. It was not, indeed, as yet free to play a spirited part in northern politics, for it was closely engaged in the arduous task of reducing the Moors in the south of the Iberian peninsula. But there was one object which gave to the Castilian court a special interest in northern politics. Ferdinand was determined at the first opportunity to recover from France the counties of Roussillon and Cerdagne. The more numerous the tribulations of the King of France, the stronger the diplomatic position of the sovereigns of Castile and Aragon, and it did not require much insight to perceive that the Breton war might be made indirectly to promote the recovery of two Pyrenean provinces. On his side Henry was anxious for a foreign alliance, not only to consolidate his dynasty, to ensure it against internal danger, to give it a footing among the great powers, but also that if he were driven into war with France over the Breton question he might at any rate have a powerful friend. Accordingly, on March 10, he sent to Spain to propose a treaty of peace and commerce, and a marriage between Catharine, aged three, the younger daughter of the Spanish sovereign, and Arthur, the heir to the Tudor throne. The English overtures were received with favour, and in July two Spanish envoys, Sepulveda and Puebla, were in London to discuss terms, and if possible to push Henry into war.

A large political issue was wrapped up in minute disputes as to the infanta's dowry. Ferdinand wished to obtain English help towards the recovery of the Pyrenean provinces; Henry wished for the prestige of the Spanish alliance. Ferdinand hoped to commit Henry to war; Henry desired to spin out time. The English court proposed that Anne should marry the Duke of Buckingham, and an embassy was sent to Brittany to forward the match and to promise English support, on condition that certain towns should be delivered up as security for the payment of the troops. Ferdinand, however, suggested

that it would be unwise to push a project which would certainly drive d'Albret and his friend de Rieux into the arms of France, and in deference to these representations the scheme was dropped. While the English envoys were travelling to Spain to treat more fully of the alliance, the French had recommenced warlike operations in Brittany, and Henry was stirred to more active measures. In November a council was summoned to Westminster to consider how Brittany might be saved, and as the winter drew on the air was filled with martial preparations. On December 11 embassies were sent to Spain and Portugal, to France and Brittany, to Maximilian and Philip, and commissions were issued to raise archers and to muster men. CHAP. II.

War was in the air when parliament met on January 13, 1489. The king asked for a grant of £100,000 to provide for the support during a whole year of an army of 10,000 archers to be used against the ancient enemies of the realm. But however popular a war with France might be, a demand at once so large and so instant provoked anxious thought. The sum which Henry was now asking of his parliament was more than three times the amount of the customs revenue; it was nearly three times the amount of a fifteenth and tenth; it was probably equal to, if not larger than, the whole revenue derived from the royal demesnes. No one could say how long the Breton war might last, but that the English troops would be home again within the year would certainly be a sanguine estimate. It would seem that the discussions were careful and protracted, for it was not until February 23, forty-one days after the opening, that parliament was ready with its reply. It was agreed as the result of conferences held with convocation that the temporalty of the realm should contribute two-thirds and the spirituality one-third of the sum demanded. In the absence of any trustworthy statistics it was guessed that an income tax of ten per cent. levied upon all incomes exceeding ten marks in value, together with a tax of 1s. 8d. for every ten marks of personal capital, would make up the required sum, always understanding that household stuff kept for use and not for sale and all sea-going ships were to be exempt from the operation of the tax, and that it was not to extend to the counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmorland, which were poor in resources and already bur-

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dened with the defence of the border against the Scots. If the army was to remain abroad for three years then the tax was to be renewed for that period, but every reduction in the numbers of the English force serving abroad was to be accompanied by a corresponding reduction in the amount raised. Commissioners were to be sent into every shire to make assessment and to name collectors from the inhabitants within the precincts of their commission. But it was to be clearly understood that this grant was of an exceptional nature, and that it was not to be taken as a precedent. Indeed, it was expressly laid down that the inquiries taken before the commissioners were to be "only for the instruction of the said commissioners and were not to be returnable to the king's court of record or even to be of record in any of the same"; and the commons inserted a clause in their indenture to the effect that such a grant had never been made before, and that "great necessity had caused it at this time to be made for the speed of the said payment". After parliament had been thanked by the chancellor, it was prorogued till October 14. It was hoped that the work of assessment and collection would be pushed forward during the summer, so that the collectors might receive their certificates of discharge when parliament met again for its autumn session.

While these discussions were in progress at Westminster, Edgecombe and Ainsworth were settling the terms of the English alliance with Brittany. From the instructions which were given to the English envoys before they crossed the Channel, it was clear that the distressed maiden was to be rescued from her foes upon the strictest principles of business. Henry was no paladin of romance, and the treaty of Redon, signed on February 10, does not belong to the documents of English chivalry. "What have I got to go to market with?" was a question once asked by the secretary of an Irish viceroy upon arriving at Dublin Castle. Henry went to market with a supply of British muscle, and he was in a position to dictate his terms. A defensive alliance between the duchess and the king was flanked by a stipulation that if ever England should wish to recover her lost French possessions, the rulers of Brittany should aid her in the attempt. The duchess was to swear that she would not marry without Henry's consent; and de Rieux, the marshal, and three or four other magnates were

to swear that so far as possible they would keep her to her oath. The duchess and her successors were to make no alliance without the express counsel and consent of England, save with the King of the Romans and the King of Spain, and then only if the King of England were expressly included. In return for these concessions Henry would send 6,000 men to serve the duchess until the next All Souls' day. But all the expenses incurred by England in connexion with the force were to be repaid from the Breton exchequer, and as a security for repayment two strong places, well equipped with cannon, powder, and defensive works, were to be handed over to the English generals as soon as the force landed, and were to be garrisoned by English troops. Three days later, on the 14th, a peace was signed at Dordrecht between Maximilian and Henry, and it only remained to receive the tidings of the English embassy to Spain and Portugal.

The voyage of Dr. Thomas Savage and Richard Nanfan was stormy and uncomfortable, but at last, on March 12, they reached the royal camp at Medina del Campo, south of Valladolid. Jousts and bull fights were held in honour of their arrival, and a treaty was signed on March 27.[1] The terms were drawn with the strictest regard for Spanish interests. It is true that Henry was granted the marriage alliance which he regarded as so important. The marriage was to be concluded as soon as the children were of suitable age, and the dowry of Catharine was fixed at 200,000 crowns, half of it payable upon her arrival in England and half of it two years later. It is true that both parties promised neither to support nor to harbour each other's rebels, and that Henry, according to the desire of Spain, was pledged to make war with France. But a clause was inserted for the express purpose of justifying the Spaniards should they decide to defer their entrance into the war till the next year; and it was provided that in case the King of France should voluntarily restore Normandy and Aquitaine to England, Henry might conclude peace without the consent of Spain, while conversely, Spain might conclude peace without the consent of England, if the King of France should restore to Ferdinand and Isabella the lost provinces of Cerdagne and Roussillon. Such a provision was clearly inequitable. The Pyrenean counties were small and unimportant, and could be surrendered without

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serious loss to the French monarchy: the restoration to England of Normandy and Guienne would have rent France in twain, nor would any French government have been strong enough or mean enough to propose it. For these and other reasons the treaty of Medina del Campo was productive of subsequent criticism from Henry's side. But it formed the corner-stone of his foreign policy, and the close connexion between England and Spain, established in this document, was destined to last for forty years.[1]

Henry went into the Breton enterprise without enthusiasm and with many reserves, but while he did not wish to be involved in a general war with France, he was unwilling to see France devour Brittany. Spain was anxious to drive him into war, and he was desirous of pleasing Spain. On the other hand, he had been enabled to conquer his throne by French help, and his truce with France still held; so that if he fought at all, it must be a defensive fight, a fight for the arrest of French aggrandisement, accompanied by clear and repeated intimations that he was willing to stop as soon as the French pressure upon Brittany was withdrawn. In the course of the spring an event occurred in England which served to justify the king's caution. When in April the commissioners came into Yorkshire and the bishopric of Durham to tax the subsidy, "the people of a sudden grew into a great mutiny," and the discontent naturally caused by a new and severe impost was probably fanned by the political malcontents of the north. The commissioners, finding that they were met by so strong a spirit of resistance, referred to the Earl of Northumberland, high sheriff of Yorkshire, who wrote to the king and prayed for directions. Henry, who never lacked for courage, replied that not a penny was to be abated; and the earl communicated the royal message to the justices and freeholders of the country. "A harsh business," says Bacon, "was unfortunately fallen into the hands of a harsh man."[2]

It is typical of the conditions of the country that the collec-

[1] The text of the treaty is printed in Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique du droit des gens*, iii., pt. ii., 219-24, and in Rymer, xii., 420-28. For discussions *cf.* Gairdner, *Henry VII.*, p. 92, and *Engl. Hist. Rev.*, viii., 353, and Busch, *England under the Tudors*, pp. 54 and 330.

[2] *History of King Henry VII.*, p. 66.

tion of a tax was the occasion of a small civil war, and that the parties to the contest were, on the one hand, the earl and his retainers, and on the other, an armed body of recalcitrant tax-payers, 500 strong, "uncourteous carls," as the poet calls them, led by "a simple fellow" called John à Chambre. Northumberland attempted to parley, was struck down in the *melée*, and deserted by his cowardly followers. The piteousness of his murder, the cowardice of his vassals, the base passion of the assailant mob have been depicted by Skelton in a moving ode:— CHAP. II.

> Barones Knightes Squiers and all,
> Together with servauntes of his family,
> Turned them back and let their master fal
> Of whom they counted not a flye;
> Take up whose wold for them, they let him ly.
> Alas! his gold, his fee, his annual rent
> Upon such sort was ill bestowed and spent.[1]

When the first outburst of rage had cooled, the rioters sent to the king to demand a pardon, but it was never Henry's way to concede to faction; and telling themselves that clemency was not to be looked for, they elected Sir John Egremont, a Yorkist knight, to be their captain, and declared that they would fight in defence of the common liberty. The Earl of Surrey was sent to quell the rebellion, and falling in with the main body of the insurgents cut them to pieces and captured all the leaders save Egremont, who made good his escape to Flanders. John à Chambre was hanged at York "in a square pair of gallows like an arch traitor," but the king, who had followed his lieutenant into Yorkshire, was merciful to the deluded rustics. Leaving Surrey behind him to govern the north, and Sir Robert Tunstall to collect the subsidy, he returned triumphant to London. Yet the parliamentary grant proved to be a complete failure, for out of the £100,000 promised only £27,000 was ever paid into the treasury.

The first English exploit of the war was achieved not in Brittany but in Flanders. Here the authority of Maximilian was stoutly contested, not only by the burghers of Ghent and of Bruges, but by the party of the Hooks throughout the Burgundian dominions. The contest between the Hooks, or Hakes,

[1] *The Poetical Works of John Skelton*, ed. A. Dyce, i., 9-10.

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and the Kabeljaws, or Codfish, was almost as long-lived, as bitter, and as protean, as the feud between the Guelfs and the Ghibellines in Germany and Italy. Originally it would seem that the Codfish were the townsfolk who wanted stable government at any price; while the Hakes were the rural nobility who wished first and foremost to preserve their feudal privileges. But time had largely obliterated this original significance, and there was a Kabeljaw and a Hook party in most of the Flemish and Dutch towns.[1] It was sufficient then for Maximilian to give office to the Codfish, for the Hakes to rise up in opposition; and in Philip of Cleves, Lord of Ravenstein, the son of the late Stadholder of the Netherlands, the Hakes found a spirited and capable leader. The situation in Flanders could not be viewed with indifference by an English statesman. The Flemish rebels were holding out their hands to the French army in Picardy, and their vessels were preying upon English commerce. If West Flanders with its important towns of Ostend, Nieuport, Furnes, and Dixmude should fall into the hands of the French or of the rebels, the Marches of Calais would be girdled by a chain of hostile garrisons. In the middle of May 4,000 Fleming rebels led by John Picquanel, a town councillor of Bruges, marched into this region, and selecting a strong position at Beerst, almost half a mile north-east of Dixmude, began the siege of the town.[2] Some loyalist noblemen of the district, aware that the rebels would before long receive French reinforcement, rode into Calais to ask for relief. The governor of Calais at this time was Giles, Lord Daubeny, whose splendid alabaster monument is one of the ornaments of Westminster Abbey. Daubeny applied to England for instructions, and Henry, seeing that the fall of Dixmude might lead to the capitulation of Furnes and Gravelines, of Nieuport and Ostend, assented to the enterprise and shipped Lord Morley across the channel with 1,000 archers to relieve it.

The affair was managed with secrecy and despatch, and on Tuesday, June 1, four days after the Picard horsemen had ridden into Calais to demand help, an English army of relief, consisting of 2,000 archers and 1,000 pikes, and accompanied by sixteen pieces of artillery moved out of the town in the dark-

[1] Wenzelburger, *Geschichte der Niederlande*, i., 194 ff.

[2] L. Gilliodts van Severen, *Inventaire des Chartes de la ville de Bruges*, vi., 334.

ness of the night. Taking the coast road to Nieuport, their left flank guarded by seven or eight ships of war, the relief force arrived on Friday, the 4th, at the abbey of the Dunes. Nieuport was but two leagues distant, and John Turpin the burgomaster, and a company of horsemen who had ridden out to meet the English troops invited them to partake of the town's hospitality. Hearing, however, that the rebel camp was in the neighbourhood, Daubeny swore by St. George that he would march straight to attack it, and fight the foe, if God so willed. He struck off in a south-easterly direction, entered the besieged city, and addressed its mercenary garrison of Burgundians and Hainaulters in terms so eloquent and moving that they swore to live and die with the English. It was arranged that the attack upon the rebel position should take place the next day, and as the attacking force was now recruited by 600 German pikemen from Nieuport, there were fair hopes of success.

A curious little incident proved to be of some value to the English cause. As Daubeny marched into Dixmude a rebel from Ghent was being led to execution. Catching sight of an old English acquaintance, the man called out that he was in a position to render a service if his life were spared, and on the next day he led the English to a weak spot in the rear of the rebel position. The battle on June 13 was stoutly contested, and there is some conflict of testimony as to the exact course of events. Morley was struck down by a cannon-shot, while riding against the north gate, and it would seem that the English attack in this quarter was repulsed with heavy loss, but subsequently made good by the shooting of the foreign allies, who ultimately gained the fort, while Daubeny's men led by their Ghentish spy effected an entrance at another point. There ensued a piteous massacre of the Flemings and the French mercenaries, and the lowest estimate of the enemy's loss is 2,500.[1] When Lord Morley's death was known every Englishman killed his prisoner, nor was any Frenchman admitted to ransom. Fifty pieces of artillery fell into the hands of the victors, not to speak of miscellaneous spoil. "The field," says Hall, "was profitable to the Englishmen, for they that went forth in cloth came home in silk, and they that went out

[1] A city chronicler reports that Daubeny killed "above 3,900 beside them that were drowned" (Kingsford, *Chronicles of London*, p. 279).

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on foot came home on great horses."[1] But the value of the booty was the smallest element of the success. Fresh heart was put into the Flemish loyalists. Ostend, which had become a repair of rebel pirates, was reduced to obedience, the garrisons of Dixmude, Dunkirk, and Furnes were reinforced from Calais, and Nieuport, its garrison refreshed at a critical moment with a force of eighty English archers, successfully resisted the siege operations of D'Esquerdes. The discomfiture of this famous general—familiar to English writers as Lord Cordes, "the covetous Lord Cordes which so sore longed for Calais that he would commonly saye that he would gladly lye seven years in Hell so that Calais were in the possession of the Frenchmen"—was peculiarly grateful to the English people.[2] The pressure upon the Pale was relieved, and the work of Maximilian's able general Albert of Saxony was sensibly assisted.

Peace, however, was nearer than anybody dreamt in Flanders or in England. On July 6 the diet of the empire met at Frankfort, and after conferences with the ambassadors of France a treaty was signed on the 22nd between Maximilian and Charles. The King of the Romans threw over his English ally in order that he might obtain the obedience of his Flemish vassals, but the long and bitter struggle in Flanders had made some kind of treaty the first necessity of statesmanship. It was stipulated that Charles should restore the Breton towns which had been in the possession of Francis II. at the time of his last treaty with France; that the English troops were to be dismissed from the Breton service; and that St. Malo, Fougères, Dinan, and St. Aubin should be neutral, and held partly in the name of the King of France and partly in the name of the King of the Romans until the question of the right to the duchy had been decided by an impartial inquiry. In the treaty of Frankfort Maximilian showed himself a shifty ally. He had received English help, and yet had taken the first opportunity to make a treaty upon his own account, which exhibited no regard for English interests. Yet to the war-worn and plague-stricken towns of Brabant and Flanders the treaty of Frankfort brought the long-looked-for relief. Albert of Saxony came to terms with Brussels and Louvain, and Flanders made its peace soon

[1] Hall's *Chronicle*, ed. 1550, 4 Henry VII., f. xviii.
[2] *Ibid.*, 4 Henry VII., f. xix.

afterwards with the King of the Romans at Moulins-les-Tours. But the moral of the whole episode was that Henry could not look to Germany for any effective help in his Breton policy. CHAP. II.

The situation in Brittany was neither simple nor encouraging when the British troops disembarked in April. The King of England still remained bound by a truce to the King of France, and Charles was anxious that the truce should be renewed. The French army was commanded by a Breton noble, the Vicomte de Rohan, who as the son-in-law of Duke Francis I. laid some claim to the duchy, and Guingamp, Brest, and Concarneau had capitulated to the fleur de lys. The keenest hostility divided Anne from her guardian de Rieux. Anne was but a girl, "virtuous, sage, honest, fair of speech, of a very gentle and subtle wit," as Brantôme, echoing the current tradition, afterwards described her,[1] but obstinate, unforgiving, and endowed with a courage of steel. Rather than wed the ogre d'Albret, as de Rieux insisted, she said that she would go into a convent, and the chancellor, Montauban, espoused her cause. Thus the French found themselves opposed to two parties, each acting separately and each suspicious of the other.

It was said at Rennes that de Rieux had suborned the English generals and the English king; that he had promised Henry that d'Albret could regain him Gascony, and that Henry and he had plotted to obtain possession of the person of the duchess in order that she might be married against her will to the elderly Gascon debauchee. Anne believed the story, refused to allow the English troops to come to Rennes, and complained to Henry that his generals were treating with the marshal, who had seized Nantes, and was levying revenues and appointing and dismissing officers as if he were master of Brittany. The King of England attempted to heal the breach between the Breton factions: he saw that it would be highly unwise to alienate de Rieux, who once before in the course of his career had deserted to the French; and he wished that Anne might review the English troops and show them some mark of confidence. But all his efforts for the present were vain. The war pursued its desultory and inconclusive course. The English took Concarneau in September, and then returned to Guingamp ill-paid, discontented, and disorderly. De Rieux besieged Brest, but

[1] *Mémoires*, Leyden, 1665, p. 4.

CHAP. II. was forced to decamp in October, leaving all his artillery in the hands of the enemy. It was in vain that in November Anne accepted the treaty of Frankfort; de Rieux and d'Albret kept up the strife, and as Morlaix and Concarneau were retained by Henry as gages for the undischarged debt to the British army, Charles felt himself authorised to continue hostilities. The greatest efforts were however made to detach Henry from the coalition, and an imposing French embassy crossed the Channel in August, and again in December to urge upon him the acceptance of the treaty of Frankfort.

Henry was well aware that he was the chief obstacle to the conclusion of the peace, but he did not intend to make peace without deriving some profit from the transaction. With considerable skill he took his parliament into his confidence, and when the houses met on October 18 they were asked to consider the French proposals. Of the discussions which ensued we know nothing, save that the French terms proved to be unacceptable to king and parliament, and that the French ambassadors applied for leave to return to Paris in order that they might get their instructions revised. On December 4 Morton came down to Westminster and prorogued parliament until January 25, 1490, by which time the French ambassadors would doubtless have returned. But though the two houses sat every day from January 25 to February 27, they were no nearer an agreement. The war must continue, and the houses were called upon to vote supplies. The king, in response to a petition representing the poverty of the commonalty of the realm, remitted the uncollected residue of the £75,000 which had been voted by the commons in the previous year; and in return the commons granted a fifteenth and a tenth in the usual form. A sum of £6,000 was, however, to be deducted "in relief and discharge of the poor towns, cities, and boroughs, wasted, desolate, or destroyed or over greatly impoverished, or else to such fifteenths and tenths over greatly charged". The lay inhabitants of Lincoln, Great Yarmouth, and New Shoreham were to be totally exempt from the tax, half of which was to be paid at the ensuing feast of St. Martin, and half at the same feast in 1491. The thanks of the king were expressed for the liberality and diligent attendance of the lords and commons through the Archbishop of Canterbury, and on February 27 parliament was dissolved.

The position of the parties in the quarrel may thus be summarised. Henry wished to reimburse himself for his military expenses in Brittany, and would not consent to renounce his claims in France without a pension equal to that which had been given to Edward IV. by Louis XI. at Picquigny in 1478. He was well content that the Spanish and English troops could not act in concert in Brittany, for he did not wish for a decisive engagement, such as would make a profitable peace with France difficult to procure. At the same time he could not at once withdraw his troops; for that would alienate Spain and disgust England. He was willing, therefore, to receive overtures from France and from the Pope in favour of peace, and to sanction a conference of ambassadors at Calais and Boulogne. Meanwhile Charles was anxious to begin his attack on the kingdom of Naples, and in order that the coast might be cleared for his Italian campaign, the sooner the affairs of Brittany could be settled the better. Ferdinand and Isabella had no scruples in deserting Henry, if they could make peace with France on the basis of the restoration of Cerdagne and Roussillon. Thus, while English and Spanish troops were ostensibly co-operating in Brittany, Spain was secretly treating with France behind England's back, offering the Infanta Joanna as a wife to Charles, and urging the pope to recall the legate whom he had sent to reconcile Charles and Henry.

Meanwhile, in March, Anne was persuaded by her advisers to marry Maximilian. It is true that she was but fourteen, and that she had never set eyes upon her bridegroom. But to be rid of d'Albret, to be a queen and then an empress, was better than a convent. The mercurial and chivalrous Maximilian had in July renewed his treaty with France at Ulm, and was deeply involved in a Hungarian war. But the gaudy fly was again attracted into the cobweb of the Anglo-Spanish alliance. On Christmas morning, at Neustadt, in Austria, Sir John Writh, king-at-arms, who had come with an English embassy, solemnly tied the garter under Maximilian's knee in the presence of the German princes. In the chapel of the castle appropriately dedicated to St. George, after the mass had been sung, the poet-laureate, Master Louis, stepped out before the altar and read the treaty against France. Then the choir sang the *Te Deum*, and the trumpets sounded, and as

CHAP. II. the heralds cried "Largesse! Largesse!" in the streets, the ambassadors of England were brought in to dinner and "spoke of high and glorious feats of arms and honourable joys". The marriage between the two interesting allies of England was celebrated by proxy, and the handsome Wolfgang von Polhain inserting his leg into the bride's bed in the presence of the German ambassadors and the lady-in-waiting, was deemed to have completed the ceremony.

Yet this high-sounding alliance availed nothing; d'Albret, now abandoned by the marshal, sold himself to France and betrayed Nantes to the enemy. In face of this important defection the coalition was impotent. Henry, indeed, sent soldiers who disembarked in May, 1491, but little aid could be expected from Maximilian, who was wrestling for the Hungarian crown; and when a diet at Nuremburg voted 12,000 lances for the Breton campaign it was too late. There was no resisting the French advance: they took Redon; they recaptured Guingamp and Concarneau; then revictualled their garrisons in Lower Brittany and sat down before Rennes. Henry sent ships to Brittany offering the duchess an escape to her Maximilian, but though her rings and jewels were pawned, and she was at the mercy of her English, Spanish, and German hirelings, she refused, with a true instinct, to quit her capital. The siege of Rennes began in the old chivalrous manner, with a tilting match between a Breton and a French champion, followed by refreshments of spiced hypocras, provided at the expense of the Queen of the Romans. But the serious work had hardly begun when mutinous grumblings arose from the English and German garrisons, who demanded a month's pay in advance. Charles was full of seductive proposals. He offered Anne three alternative husbands and a revenue, but she refused; then he turned to the mutinous foreign troops, promising to pay their arrears if they would march out of Rennes. They accepted his offer and the King of France entered the Breton capital, and asked for Anne's hand. Orleans, released from prison with politic clemency, seconded the request. The girl's confessor vanquished her last scruples. Yet she had already been married by proxy to Maximilian, and Charles had already been affianced and married to Maximilian's daughter when he was a boy of twelve and Margaret was an infant of three.

On December 6, 1491, the wedding of the King of France and the Duchess of Brittany took place at Langeais in Touraine. Papal dispensations waived aside all inconvenient objections of consanguinity or precontract. Anne was Queen of France and Brittany was for practical purposes a French province. CHAP. II.

Brittany then was gone, and gone for ever; yet the war could not be suddenly wound up without dishonour. Henry had raised a benevolence in July and had summoned parliament in October, telling his lords and commons that it was now his intention to make war upon France in person, not as before to defend Brittany, but to recover the ancient rights of England, and parliament had responded to the appeal with a liberal grant. Understanding that it was the king's purpose to hazard his own most noble person in a war against the ancient enemies of England, the commons, with the consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, granted two whole fifteenths and tenths with a deduction of £12,000 in favour of decayed and impoverished cities; and a third fifteenth and tenth was promised, with similar deductions and exceptions, in the event of the king being abroad for a space exceeding eight months.

It was necessary to make some martial show in return for such liberality, and while warlike preparations were being pushed forward Henry hoped to rivet Spain more closely to his cause. In September he proposed so to amend the treaty of Medina del Campo that neither party should be able to make peace with France without the consent of the other; and in November he drew up some articles to the effect that the two powers should bind themselves to declare war upon France before April 15 next ensuing, and that the two kings should invade France in person and bind themselves to conquer all the provinces usurped by the King of France. Spain was then in the last throes of her struggle with the Moors, and Henry must have drafted his propositions rather to content his council than with any serious hope of their acceptance. Indeed the complexion of European politics did not encourage any hope that England would receive any substantial measure of support in the forthcoming struggle. Maximilian had every reason for hating Charles, who had repudiated his daughter and robbed him of his wife, and he promised to serve Henry for two years with 10,000 men; but when Henry's envoys, Christopher Urswick

CHAP. II. and John Risley, came to apprise him of the English preparations, they found that he was unprepared to help. Civil war had again flamed out in Flanders and Holland, and raged through the spring and early summer of 1492, and the diet of princes at Coblentz refused to forward the enterprise against France. Henry had made a treaty with the Duke of Milan, on July 27, 1490, and now appealed to Ludovico Sforza to effect a diversion. But that astute politician was weaving a tissue of a very different nature, and in the end the King of England was thrown back upon his own resources.

The spring and summer of 1492 were spent in active military preparations. A plot was hatched in January with some disaffected Bretons for the surrender of Brest to an English fleet, but the news leaked out, and it came to nothing. In the middle of the summer an army was collected at Portsmouth, and three great breweries were built to provide for its liquid refreshment. The fleet actually set sail in June, but returned with nothing accomplished. In August there seems to have been some apprehension of a French landing, for the inhabitants of Kent and Sussex were told to be ready at an hour's warning to serve the king in their harness. Autumn came and still there was no war. Though Granada had fallen, though its fall had been celebrated by rejoicings in London, though Spanish plenipotentiaries had been appointed to discuss the proposed changes in the treaty, there was no Spanish sail to be descried in the Channel, and barely a hint of possible Spanish help. Yet Henry had obtained supplies from parliament and wrung a benevolence from the opulent on the faith of the war. Every alderman of London had been compelled to lend him £200, and every alderman of London expected that at that price there could be some pretty fighting against the ancient enemy. The king could no longer avoid a campaign. At the beginning of September he marched towards the coast.

For a brief spell the inactivity of England was broken. Philip of Cleves, Maximilian's old antagonist, had seized upon the seaport town of Sluys, and was enriching himself by systematic piracy. Complaints of his dealings reached Henry alike from the merchant adventurers employed in the cloth trade and from the Duke of Saxony, who had begun the investment of the town as early as May 18. At last, at the beginning of August, a small English fleet with 2,500 men on board was

despatched under Sir Edward Poynings to assist Maximilian's general in the blockade. The defence and the taking of Sluys formed an important and striking episode in the eyes of contemporaries, and it proved to be the concluding act in the long and turbulent drama of the Flemish civil war. The skirmishing was spirited, and the Danish mercenaries of the rebel leader were conspicuous for their cruelty, their courage, and their resource. The besieging force, like that which invested Ilium of old, included many races—English and Germans, Brabanters, Hainaulters, and Flemings. At last, on October 13, the town capitulated on terms, and the castle was ceded to the English admiral, who had largely contributed to the success of the operations. CHAP. II.

Some days before the fall of Sluys, Henry crossed over to Calais, the strains of minstrels and the jests of a Spanish fool relieving the tedium of the passage. The English army, which was recruited by a system of indenture, and paid at the rate of eighteen-pence a day for the men-at-arms, ninepence a day for the demi-lances, and sixpence a day for the archers, numbered 25,000 foot and 1,600 horse. The Earls of Oxford, Shrewsbury, Devonshire, Sussex, and Essex, Lords Grey, Strange, Powis, Hastings, Audley, Latimer, and Dudley, were among the nobles who contributed contingents. The king had drawn up a code of rules to determine their duties, to regulate discipline, and to apportion the spoils taken from the enemy; and Prince Arthur was appointed regent during his absence. All through the summer negotiations had been proceeding at Calais and Etaples between French and English commissioners, and Henry was well aware that his absence from England need not be unduly protracted. On October 22 the English army settled down before Boulogne, which had been provisioned for two years, and was defended by 1,800 men-at-arms. The sound of the English guns was heard as far as Grammont in Flanders, and we are assured that some impression was made upon the walls. But the siege was never seriously intended, and in the words of the patriotic Hall, who wrote in the succeeding reign, "when every one was prest and ready to give the assault, a sudden rumour arose that the commissioners had concluded peace—which bruit as it was pleasant and mellifluous to the Frenchmen, so was it to the English nation bitter, sour, and dolorous".[1]

[1] Hall, *Chronicle*, 7 Henry VII., f. xxvii.

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The proposals for peace, however, which D'Esquerdes submitted on behalf of the French government were by Henry laid before the captains of the English army, and the captains presented a petition, the spirit and argument of which was probably inspired by the king, in favour of coming to terms with the enemy. They spoke of the long nights, of "the great and outrageous cold of the winter season," of the difficulty of provisioning the camp, seeing that food and ammunition must be transported from England through "the great rage and tempest of winds and weather". The idea that Boulogne was feebly fortified had been rudely shaken; they had already lost one valued life; they could not hope for aid from allies, and in the capture of the town and castle of Sluys enough had been done for English honour. King Edward IV. had made a descent upon France not twenty years ago; he had the assistance of the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, and he was favoured by the summer season; yet he retreated upon terms without entering pile or fortress.[1] The offers now made by the King of France were far more favourable than those which Edward had accepted, and were indeed unprecedented in French history. Charles agreed to pay the whole debt due to Henry from Anne of Brittany for his defence of the duchy, a sum amounting to 620,000 crowns, or £124,000 sterling, in addition to two years' arrears of the pension promised by Louis XI. at the peace of Amiens, or 125,000 crowns. This indemnity, equal perhaps to £3,500,000 or £4,000,000 sterling of our money, was to be paid in half-yearly instalments of £25,000. Both parties undertook not to assist the enemies of the other, and Henry specially promised that he would not assist Maximilian should he determine to continue the war. In a separate document Charles undertook that he would give no countenance to Henry's rebels. On November 3, 1492, the peace was signed at Etaples.

So ended Henry's one and only foreign war. It has been the custom to censure his lack of chivalry and to regard the peace of Etaples as a stain upon England's honour. The English knights and squires who had borrowed money and mortgaged lands, in order that they might raise retinues for the war and recoup their losses from the plunder of France, were chagrined at so meek and ungainful a conclusion. The

[1] Rymer, xii., 490-94.

blame was freely thrown by contemporaries upon Maximilian, who was ignorantly and unjustly accused of emulating the torpor of the dormouse; but it is now clear that if the English had waited another month before Boulogne they would have been assisted by 4,000 German landsknechts. The desertion of Maximilian at Etaples need not, however, be counted to Henry for a crime; it was a fair answer to Frankfort and to Ulm. Yet to all appearance Henry had not only abandoned his allies, but had deceived his own people as well. Though he had spoken big words about the recovery of the lost provinces, and in the strength of these assurances had extracted benevolences and parliamentary supplies; nevertheless he made a money bargain with the enemy after a brief cannonade. It was an inevitable inference that the war was a sham war, and that Henry had never intended it to be a real one. The impression in France was that the King of England made war simply to please his people and against his better judgment. In England a less favourable view was taken: "They stuck not to say that the king cared not to plume his nobility and people to feather himself".[1] But if there was a mean strain in Henry's composition, it was associated with a true sense of natural interests. It is not enough to say that the king was thrifty and avaricious; that he revelled in double-dealing, and that his temperament was too cold for war. Henry was shrewd enough to see that he could never reconquer Normandy and Guienne. He had already been sufficiently advertised of the fact that parliamentary grants were small, inelastic, and unpopular, and there was enough in the Yorkshire rising to show him that a long foreign war would bring the dynasty to ruin. To establish his finances on a firm basis, a basis as independent as possible of fifteenths and tenths, was therefore a prime necessity of policy, and to do this he must sacrifice martial ambition. There were other reasons hardly less imperious which pointed in the same direction. The British trade with Flanders, molested by piracy and civil war, demanded peace, and Henry was always interested in trade. But the most weighty motive for withdrawal from France was, that in the autumn of 1492 Henry knew that England would soon be called on to sustain a fresh tempest of civil disturbance.

[1] Alain Bouchard, *Les Grandes Cronicques de Bretaigne*, iv., 220; Bacon, *History of Henry VII.*, p. 103.

CHAPTER III.

PERKIN WARBECK.

CHAP. III. SHATTERED as the Yorkist party really was by the battles of Bosworth and Stoke, it was still a formidable tool in the hands of foreign powers. The code of political honour prevalent at that time and indeed for many centuries afterwards countenanced underhand traffic with the rebellious factions of hostile states, and as Henry was willing to assist the Bretons against Charles of France, so Charles was willing to give countenance to the Yorkists against Henry. The mystery which shrouded the fate of the two sons of Edward IV. had never been entirely dispelled; and so long as there was mystery there was room for every form of surmise and affirmation, of prophecy and hope. There can have been no subject of conversation more generally attractive than this dark tragedy, and in the tap-rooms, refectories, and manor houses of England busy minds and tongues must often have been exercised in the discussion of it. The official statement supported by the confession of the *soi-disant* murderers was doubtless widely accepted, and every year tended to make an alternative supposition more improbable. If one of the princes had escaped—and it was difficult to suppose that escape would have been possible after the imposture of Simnel—would not his adherents have been immediately informed of the fact? What possible motive could there be for concealment save the preservation of the youth's personal safety? And how could that safety be endangered by disclosure if he had acted as upon every reasonable supposition he would act, and had fled at once to the friendly court of Flanders? Margaret of Burgundy was not a lady to let such an arrival pass unadvertised. If her nephew was alive and free, he would be in Flanders, and if he was in Flanders all the world would know it.

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But however convincing such a train of reasoning might be for those who cared to reason about the subject, it was not generally decisive. The soil of tragedy is fertile in reckless loyalty and desperate hope. Credulous minds still cherished delusions, and unscrupulous minds were preparing to invent delusions for them to cherish. The business of the Yorkist opposition was to oppose, and to oppose with any chance of success it was necessary to find a prince of the royal blood. If a real prince could be discovered so much the better; but if not a counterfeit must be trained up to act the part. In Ireland, in Scotland, and in Flanders he would find support.

Henry had, as we have seen, been at pains to cultivate friendly relations with his northern neighbour James III., and in 1487 an indenture had been entered into for three marriages between the English and the Scottish court. The negotiations, however, came to nothing, for James demanded the restoration of the town and castle of Berwick, which for the last twenty-one years had been in English hands, and Henry considered the alliance was not worth the price. The next year witnessed an astonishing revolution in Scotland, many particulars of which are still obscure. James III., albeit possessed of many attractive gifts and refined and unconventional sympathies, had incurred the deadly hatred of a powerful section of the Scottish nobility. In 1482 three of his favourites had been seized and hanged at the bridge of Calder; in 1488 he was faced by a serious rebellion. A battle was fought at Sauchieburn—hard by the classic field of Bannockburn—and the king's forces were routed by the insurgent nobles, who had persuaded the heir to the throne, then a lad of fifteen years, to embrace their side. In a hurried and ignominious flight the unfortunate king was murdered in a peasant's hut, and James IV. ascended the throne of his father which had been prematurely won for him by crime. The young monarch, though a lover of pleasure, proved to be a vigorous and active ruler. Full of curiosity and enterprise he would visit the cottages of the poor in the guise of a common traveller to collect opinions as to the conduct of the king. He would preside in parliament, attend the audits of the exchequer, go upon the circuits of justiciary; and the legislation of his reign is marked by much that is wise and enlightened. Under him Scotland issued from

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her northern gloom into the full light of western civilisation. But though James was anxious to make his court famous for civility his character was unstable and licentious. Popular with the commons, a patron of learning and of the Church, a promoter of naval improvements, he was at once extravagant, obstinate, and superstitious, and his showy and wayward policy ultimately brought his country to disaster.

Hardly had James ascended the throne when it became clear that Scotland intended to play an active part in the scheme of European diplomacy. Envoys were sent to the pope and to the Kings of Spain, France, and Denmark, and brisk communications were opened with Margaret of Burgundy. The letters which passed between Margaret and James in 1488 and 1489 have been lost, and we do not know what was in them; but it is significant that a large payment was made to a herald "that came forth of Ireland and passed to the Duchess of Burgundy," and that in the same year the Earl of Bothwell was sent upon an embassy to Paris. It was clear that Scotland was already drifting into familiar and perilous waters.

While the issue of the civil strife in Scotland was still uncertain, Henry with characteristic caution negotiated simultaneously with both sides; but when James IV. ascended the throne a truce was made on October 5, 1488, between the two countries for three years. The amity, however, was apparent rather than real. The old feud continued to be waged on the borders and on the high seas, and two naval duels fought in the Firth of Forth between Sir Andrew Wood, the great Scottish admiral, and some English vessels have been immortalised in the vivid narrative of Pitscottie. Wood was one of the servants of James III. who found it in his heart to condone rebellion and constructive parricide. But there were others whose conduct was less compliant or less patriotic, and who entered into relations with the English court. The Master of Huntly in January, 1489, appealed to Henry to aid in the punishment of the Scottish regicides, and on April 17, 1491, Henry signed a compact with Lord Bothwell and a certain Thomas Tod by which, for a sum of £266 13s. 4d., these two persons bound themselves to get possession of the person of James and of his brother and to deliver them to King Henry in England. To kidnap a Scottish king was a classic device, and considered to be as legitimate

as cattle-lifting in Teviotdale. Henry's main object was to secure peace. He had bound James by a truce, but he did not feel certain that it would not be broken at the first opportunity, for one of the allegations preferred against the fallen king was that he had been too favourable to the English connexion. So while renewing truces with James he intrigued behind his back, in April plotting to have him kidnapped, in November entering into a bond with that hardened villain Archibald Douglas, who having helped to dethrone one Scottish king was now willing to betray another. The diplomacy was detestable, but events were destined to show that Henry had good grounds for suspecting the pacific intentions of the Scots. CHAP. III.

In the year in which these secret bonds were signed, a Breton merchant, by name Pregent Meno, put into Cork harbour, having in his service a handsome young fellow of seventeen named Peter Warbeck or Osbeck, son of John Warbeck or Osbeck, a boatman on the Scheldt and tidewaiter of Tournay. It was apparently one of the functions of this youth to serve as a walking advertisement of his master's silks, and as he swaggered through the streets of Cork the mercurial inhabitants were attracted by the brilliance of his appearance. Surely he must be a prince? It seems likely that a plot was already on foot to obtain a new Yorkist impostor, for a letter written from Rouen on September 15, 1490, by a certain John Taylor, a Yorkist exile, says that the King of France by the advice of his council had determined to aid and support the son of the Duke of Clarence to his right. The son of the Duke of Clarence was the Earl of Warwick, and the adherents of the White Rose in Cork attempted to induce the silk merchant's assistant to personate him. Warbeck declined to accept the *rôle*, and swore before John Lewelyn, then mayor of Cork, that he was not Clarence's son. He was then asserted to be a bastard son of Richard III.; he denied the allegation; but as the Yorkist party was not to be rebuffed, it was finally settled that he should assume the part of Richard of York, the second son of Edward IV. The prime movers in the conspiracy were humble and obscure, but the help of the Earls of Kildare and Desmond was confidently expected. "And so against my will," said Warbeck six years afterwards, "they made me to learn English and taught me what I should do and say." On March 2,

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1492, an English messenger named Edward Ormond brought letters from King Edward's son and the Earl of Desmond to James IV. The conspiracy was now fairly launched; and as England was drifting into war with France, it was launched at a time most opportune for the conspirators. Charles VIII., whose share in these intrigues may have been more important than has hitherto been suspected, invited the boy to Paris, received him as a royal prince, and gave him a guard of honour. About 100 English Yorkists crossed over to offer their swords to King Edward's son; but the French career of the pretendant was abruptly closed, for in virtue of a clause in the treaty of Etaples he was obliged to quit the country.

As might have been predicted, Warbeck sought refuge with Margaret of Burgundy, who acknowledged him as her nephew and doubtless completed his education in the traditions and accomplishments of his new family. Maximilian, incensed at Henry's desertion of him at Etaples, was only too glad to favour Margaret's design, and it was clear that no obstacle would be opposed to a Yorkist expedition by the council which governed Flanders for Maximilian's son, Philip. By promising "duchies, counties, baronies, and other lands" in England, Margaret might be able to collect a force of mercenaries no less formidable than that which had served under the redoubtable Martin Swart; and Henry fully realised the danger. As early as 1493 he was aware of the true name and origin of the pretendant, and while devising military measures for the defence of the kingdom, he sent Sir Edward Poynings and Dr. Warham to Flanders to explain and denounce the fiction. The coarse and laboured witticisms of the divine justly incensed the Lady Margaret, and the archduke's council replied that, while they were anxious to maintain peace with England, they could not interfere with the dowager-duchess, who was at liberty to act as she chose within the lands of her dowry. Such an answer was in itself an affront, and Henry retaliated by banishing all Flemings from England, by prohibiting commercial intercourse with Flanders, and by recalling the merchant adventurers from Antwerp. The English cloth-market was transferred from the Low Countries to Calais.

These measures were almost as damaging to the English as to the Flemings. It soon appeared that the real gainers

would be the Hanseatic merchants of the Steelyard, whose commercial privileges were extensive, and who as foreigners were still permitted to carry on the lucrative and forbidden trade. While the merchant adventurers were forced to dismiss hands or reduce wages, the Easterlings were stealing their business. The jealousy of foreigners, which is never very far below the surface among the ignorant of any nation, burst out into open flame, and on October 15 a band of some 500 London apprentices, of whom the mercers were most conspicuous, attacked the Steelyard arms in hand and began to rifle the warehouses. The Easterlings succeeded in repulsing their assailants and in shutting the great gates, and some carpenters and smiths, brought in from Southwark by way of the river, helped to improve their defences. Luckily the mayor heard of the affray, and came down upon the scene with a following sufficient to disperse the crowd. Upon an inquiry before the king's commissioners, eighty servants and apprentices were found guilty, and the ringleaders among them were committed to the Tower. CHAP. III.

The commercial rift with Flanders was destined to last for two years, and meanwhile Peter, derisively called Perkin, Warbeck was advertising his claims through Europe. He wrote a Latin letter to Queen Isabella of Spain; he was present at the funeral of Frederick III. in Vienna, marching in procession between the envoys of Sicily and Venice. In the summer of 1494 he travelled with Maximilian to Flanders, and was publicly acknowledged by the new emperor as the lawful King of England. It was in vain that Henry sent Garter King-at-Arms to remonstrate and explain; in vain that the Tyrolese, who were pressed for 16,000 florins to promote a Yorkist expedition, openly declared that the enterprise was founded in folly: Maximilian still adhered to Perkin, who asserted that he was able to prove his claims by three natural marks upon his body. "The King of England" figured in imperial processions and archducal ceremonies, and the Lancastrian visitor to Antwerp was inflamed by the sight of the white rose on the uniforms of the pretender's archers, and the ambitious arms and title which were blazoned on the façade of his residence.

It was at this time that Charles VIII. was preparing to plunge his country into a war for the conquest of Naples, and

CHAP. III. it was essential that he should rivet still closer the bonds which had been forged at Etaples. He therefore sent the Archbishop of Reims and La Trémouille upon an embassy to Henry to denounce the projects of the emperor, and to offer French help against them. In the intention of aiding "him who calls himself Plantagenet and professes to be the son of the late King Edward," Maximilian had come to Flanders with a good force. Charles had assisted Henry to gain his kingdom, and he would now assist him to defend it. The ships of Brittany and Normandy were at his service if a reasonable rate of pay were offered. He had indeed enjoined on his officers and his ships that all who wished to serve Henry should do so; and he had prohibited his subjects from giving any assistance to "the lad". The King of England replied to these overtures with dignified courtesy. He was grateful for the good and cordial love of his brother and cousin, but as the matter of the lad was of so little esteem and value, he did not wish to lay any burden upon his brother's subjects. As for Perkin he could do no harm. Every lord and man of substance in authority in the kingdom of England knew his claim to be a manifest fraud. It was notorious that the lad was no relative of King Edward, but a native of Tournay, and the son of a boatman, and that his name was Warbeck. Henry had the facts from men who knew his life, and had been or were his companions, and he was sure that the King of the Romans knew them too. If Maximilian supported Warbeck, it was because he had taken displeasure at the treaty between England and France. Henry added that he was in good health, and that the kingdom was in as good and peaceable obedience as it had ever been in the memory of man. Seeing this, he had determined to put into order his country of Ireland, that is to say, those who were called "Wild Irishmen," in order that henceforth they might live in policy and justice as did the Irish of the English tongue. For this end he was about to send a good and sufficient army, accompanied by good and great personages both for war and justice. He had been very instantly supplicated and prayed to do this by notable people in the Church, by the great lords and other persons of estate in the English Pale. The army would be ready to pass by the month of September.

Henry's confidence was no doubt largely assumed, but he

was not exaggerating when he assured the French king that he had accurate knowledge of the origin and the plans of Perkin. The news that a new Yorkist pretendant had appeared above the horizon cleared the English sanctuaries of their refugees. Debtors and broken men fled to Flanders to repair their fortunes, and the Yorkist conspirators despatched Sir Robert Clifford and William Barley to report upon the new apparition. Clifford was introduced to the pretender, and wrote home to his English friends that he recognised the face, and that it was the face of Richard of York. But Henry had taken counter-measures. He sent spies liberally furnished with money and charged to insinuate themselves into the counsels of the conspirators, and to offer the royal pardon to Clifford and Barley if they would come home and reveal what they knew. Bacon adds that there was a "strange tradition" that "for the better credit of his espials abroad" Henry did use to have them cursed at Paul's by name among the bead-roll of his enemies. Be this as it may, Henry's espionage proved to be a brilliant success. Clifford was won over to the royal side, pardoned, and rewarded, and his revelations, added to those previously received through the king's spies, broke the conspiracy in England. The first blow fell in the autumn of 1494, when a number of persons, including Lord Fitzwalter, Sir Simon Mountford, Sir Thomas Thwaites, William Daubeny, Robert Ratcliffe, Thomas Cressener, Thomas Astwood, William Worseley, Dean of St. Paul's, two Dominican friars, and two priests were arrested, brought to London, and tried for their lives. Of these Mountford, Ratcliffe, and Daubeny were beheaded, while others were hanged at Tyburn. But all the churchmen and several also of the laymen received the royal pardon. A more surprising revelation was to follow. CHAP. III.

On the morrow after Twelfth night, 1495, the king removed from Greenwich, where he had kept his Christmas, to the Tower of London, to receive the verbal confidences of Clifford, who had just arrived in England. Polydore Vergil, who is followed by Stow and Bacon, says that the king went to the Tower in order that he might have a prison ready at hand in case Clifford should indicate a fresh traitor. If so, the precaution was justified, for among the names now delated was that of Sir William Stanley, the lord chamberlain. Polydore reports that

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Henry at first could not bring himself to believe in the guilt of his trusted servant, and indeed no defection seemed less probable.[1] It was largely owing to Stanley that the king owed his victory at Bosworth, and the eminent though tardy service rendered upon that occasion had been amply repaid. Stanley held high office at court; and was the richest subject in the kingdom, and as his brother was married to the mother of the king it would seem that he would have everything to gain by the continuance of the Tudor dynasty. But he fell into the error of attempting to insure his fortunes against the chances of a Yorkist restoration. Ever since March, 1493, he had been bound by secret bonds to Clifford, and Bernard André's assertion that Stanley had promised to subsidise Warbeck's attempt from his large resources is based on the word of the turncoat Clifford and was believed by a Westminster jury. There is no room for surprise that Henry should have decided to allow the law to take its course. On February 16, Stanley's head was struck off, and a week later four persons were arraigned at Guildhall for forging seditious libels against the king and the council. Where the evidence is so scanty it is idle to speculate upon motives. Polydore says that Stanley confessed his crime, but the terms of that confession, if confession there were, have been lost. Yet though all else may be obscure, the effect of Stanley's execution was clear and palpable. It struck terror into the hearts of the English Yorkists and paralysed the conspiracy at its centre. In Bacon's picturesque phrase, the accomplices of Perkin were now as "sand without lime".

The events of the summer demonstrated the prudence of this series of investigations, trials, and punishments. The expedition of Perkin may have been postponed, but it was not cancelled in consequence of the king's fatal swoop upon his English adherents. But before the expedition set sail its promoters were careful to secure a formal guarantee of their share of the profits. By a deed drawn up on December 10, 1494,

[1] The charge against Stanley was first discovered by Mr. W. A. J. Archbold in 1899 (*Engl. Hist. Rev.*, xiv., 529-34). According to a later account the king had long suspected his lord chamberlain (Brewer, *Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII.*, iii., pt. i., 490). The City Chronicler (Cotton MS., Vitellius A. xvi., f. 154, since printed by Kingsford, *Chronicles of London*) alludes to the fame of Stanley's wealth. It was reported that £40,000 sterling in coin, plate and jewels was found in his castle of Holt, and that in addition to this his lands and fees amounted to £3,000.

the pretender engaged to repay his putative aunt for her liberality. In the event of success he would not only give effect to all the grants made to her by her brother King Edward, but he would give her the town and castle of Scarborough, reimburse her for the expenses which she had incurred in the support of the Earl of Lincoln and Lord Lovell, and repay the 800,000 crowns which she was then advancing in his own cause. Even larger promises were extracted from the adventurer by Maximilian and Philip. Those princes were so far from being disinterested that they obtained from Warbeck a formal grant of all his rights over the kingdoms of England and France, the Duchy of York, the lordship of Ireland, and the principality of Wales in the case of his death without heirs male, or on the failure of his descent in the male line. This, however, was not all. "With regard to the Duke of York," said Maximilian to the Venetian ambassadors, "we entertain great hopes that he will soon attack the King of France; and to this effect have we received every promise and certainty from the duke aforesaid."[1] It was a speculative enterprise, but the stakes were high, and Maximilian, who was nothing if not sanguine, invested some money and squandered some reputation in its promotion. CHAP. III.

"Gathering," in the contemptuous words of Hall, "a great army of valiant captains of all nations, some bankrupt, some false English sanctuary men, some thieves, robbers, and vagabonds," Warbeck took to the sea, and on July 3, 1495, appeared off Deal. As the wind dropped the anchors were let down, and an exploring party 300 strong was put on shore. But preparations had clearly been made to parry an invasion, for no sooner were the Yorkist banners unfurled than a man-at-arms rode up and asked the strangers to whom they belonged. "We belong to the Duke of York," came the reply. "We ask no other lord in the world," said the man, "we will live and die with him; let him and his company put ashore; we will do him all possible honour, aid, and favour." So saying, and with a promise that he would fetch beer for their refreshment, he rode away, but had got but a short distance when all of a sudden the company was surrounded and attacked by an overwhelming

[1] R. Brown, *Calendar State Papers, Venice*, i., No. 680.

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force of Kentishmen. At the end of the struggle 150 Yorkists lay on the field riddled with arrows and slashed with sword cuts. Eight captains, two of them Spaniards, were taken alive and a number of men, variously estimated as seventy-two, eighty, and a hundred and sixty-nine; "which rebelles," says the chronicler, "were brought by Sir John Peechey, sheriff of Kent, railed in ropes like horses drawing in a cart". The English prisoners were hanged either in London or in the coast towns, but some of the foreigners were admitted to ransom. Warbeck suspecting a ruse had prudently refrained from landing, and having watched the destruction of his followers from shipboard, set sail for the west. There was no ambiguity about the attitude of the country folk. "All the villages said the king would come, and that this fellow might go to his father and mother who live in France and are well known there."

When Henry boasted to Charles VIII. of his preparations for the reduction of Ireland, he was speaking sober truth. The state of Ireland had forced itself upon his attention since the enterprise of Simnel; and the support given to Warbeck in the winter of 1491 by Irishmen so influential as Desmond and Kildare made it all the more necessary to devise some remedy. Accordingly, in 1492, Kildare was deprived of his office of deputy, while at the same time Rowland Fitz-Eustace, Baron of Portlester, the earl's uncle, was deprived of the lord treasurership which he had held for a period of thirty-eight years. The deputyship was given to Walter Fitzsimons the Archbishop of Dublin, and two important offices were conferred on members of the Butler connexion. But no permanent cure could be effected by the transference of authority from the more powerful to the less powerful of the Irish factions. Civil strife raged in Dublin, and Kildare protested with the light-hearted effrontery of the Celt that he had never supported "the French lad". Obtaining with characteristic resourcefulness a certificate of loyalty from several members of the colonial aristocracy, he went up to London in 1493 to disperse the suspicions and to obtain the pardon of the king. The pardon was granted, but the thick cloud of suspicion which hung round Kildare was not so effectually dissolved as to admit his restoration to the office of deputy. The fact was that Henry had resolved upon a change of system. Transferring the titular

dignity of the lieutenancy from his uncle Bedford to his second son, then a child in his third year, he determined to appoint as deputy a soldier who would not only stand outside the factions of the Pale, but who would be able to extract revenues from the island and reduce the native Irish to obedience. CHAP. III.

On September 13, 1494, his choice fell upon Sir Edward Poynings, who had achieved military distinction at the siege of Sluys. In his patent of appointment the lord deputy was instructed to summon a parliament before the ensuing Easter, to compel all those Irish officials, who were required to do so by the tenure of their office, to render their accounts to the treasurer and the barons of the exchequer, and to make an inquiry into the extent of the royal revenues. Poynings landed at Howth on October 13, with a train of Englishmen destined to fill the highest administrative and judicial posts in the colony and with an English force 1,000 strong. Joining hands with the levies of Kildare and Sir James Ormond, he proceeded to invade Ulster, an expedition designed to punish the "Great O'Donnell," chief of Tyrconnell, who had been intriguing with James IV. of Scotland. But neither Henry nor the lord deputy had gauged the difficulties of Irish warfare. With no maps, with no roads, with no overwhelming superiority of armament, an English force was helpless in that land of woods and morasses, of skirmishes and ambuscades. Treachery, too, served to multiply the difficulties of the campaign. When the English army reached O'Hanlon's country, Ormond persuaded Poynings that Kildare was plotting his destruction and that, in conjunction with Desmond, he had invited the Scottish king to break the English power in Ireland. The conduct of Kildare's brother James Fitzgerald gave colour to the accusation. He hoisted the Geraldine colours on the castle of Carlow and refused to surrender to the forces of the king. Instead of the reduction of Ulster, Poynings had to content himself with the reduction of Carlow, and the moral of it all was that Ireland could not be reduced by force.

But as the chronicler says there were in Ireland two kinds of men: one "soft, gentle, civil, and courteous"; the other "wild, rustical, foolish, and fierce".[1] Poynings had failed against

[1] Hall, 11 Henry VII., f. xxxvi, b.

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the wild Irish; he had now to address himself to the problem of re-asserting English authority in the Pale. A parliament met at Drogheda on December 1 which, in the absence of the Earls of Kildare, Desmond, and Ormond, readily lent itself to the lord deputy's plans. An act of resumption was passed revoking every royal grant made in Ireland during the preceding 168 years. It was declared illegal to wage war or to keep ordnance without the governor's licence, to use the old family battle cries, or to practice livery and maintenance. Coigne and livery, or the practice of pillaging the poor for the support of the retainers of the great lords, was made a penal offence. To stir up English or Irish against the viceroy was henceforward to be deemed an act of treason. The statutes of Kilkenny, framed with the object of preventing the English colony from becoming too Irish in its habits, were re-enacted with the exception of the clauses against those who used the Irish language or rode without a saddle in the Irish fashion. Then followed a series of measures for the defence of the colony against the septs. All subjects of the king were bound to provide themselves with cuirasses and helmets and with English bows and arrows. The Pale was to be girdled by a double ditch, made by the labour of the inhabitants who lived along the border of the four shires, and every parish was to be provided with a pair of butts, at which archery practice was made compulsory upon holidays.

Two statutes, however, stand out pre-eminently from the voluminous legislation of the Drogheda parliament, and became known in later times as Poynings' laws. The first enacted that no future parliament should be held in Ireland but "at such season as the king's lieutenant and council there first do certify the king under the great seal of that land the causes and considerations, and all such acts as there seemeth should pass in the same parliament". And only if the king in council should approve these proposed statutes should an Irish parliament be summoned under the great seal of England. The second act provided that all public statutes "late made within the said realm of England" should be in force in Ireland, and the phrase "late made" was subsequently interpreted to mean made before the tenth year of Henry VII. The Irish legislature was thus made triply dependent upon England. It could

not be summoned without the leave of the king in council; it could discuss no bills which had not the approval of the king in council, and its legislation was liable to be over-ridden and supplemented by the laws of the parliament sitting in London. In after years Poynings' laws came to be regarded as a mortal affront against Irish liberty; but such was not the view of the colonists, "at whose request" this legislation professed to be and probably was devised. For the inhabitants of the Irish Pale during the closing years of the fifteenth century the real danger did not lie in the distant power of the King of England, but in the arbitrary demeanour of the Irish viceroy, who might use the parliament of the Pale as the instrument of his ambitions, his avarice, or his feuds. It is true that by the Poynings' acts the Irish legislature was put into shackles, that it could no longer decree the son of an Oxford tradesman to be the lawful King of England, or denounce penalties against those who refused to acknowledge the impostor. But if the shackles were mainly devised for the better security of the English throne, they were also regarded as a valuable safeguard by the poorer colonists of the Pale; and though during the reign of Elizabeth the Irish government more than once urged that the acts should be suspended, the demand was always resisted by the colony.

The parliament of Drogheda put the seal upon its loyalty by passing an act of attainder against the Earl of Kildare, a measure which was probably far more impressive to the wild tribes of Connaught, of Ulster, and of Munster, than all its constitutional and administrative enactments. Kildare was arrested, shipped off to England, and imprisoned in the Tower. The triumph of the lord deputy seemed to be complete, but though the sky was clear for the moment, storms were hurrying up from every side. Before the parliament had concluded its sessions Poynings was marching another army into the wilds of Ulster, and the familiar story of an English punitive force baffled by forest, by morass, and by the sly tactics of a vanishing and harassing foeman, was enacted anew. This time Poynings digested the lesson that pensions were more useful than bills and bows, and cajolery more effective than force. He began to form a system of native alliances, sweetened and commended by payments and pensions to the septs, while at the same time,

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in conjunction with his relative Hatcliffe, the under-treasurer, he attempted to restore the finances of the crown. But the work of financial inquiry can hardly have progressed far, when Poynings was called upon once more to take up the work of a soldier.

Less than three weeks after his descent upon Kent, Warbeck was in Munster with the Earl of Desmond. Sailing up the splendid harbour of Waterford with eleven ships, some of which were Scottish, and possibly provided by the Scottish king, Warbeck attempted to capture the chief stronghold of Irish loyalism. The city was invested by land and water, but the burghers made a stout and effectual defence, and after eleven days of siege the assailants drew off upon the approach of the lord deputy and his relieving army. In the next January Poynings was recalled to England. In less than two years he had dealt a blow at once crushing and final to the Irish Yorkists; but it may well be that the king was not wholly pleased with the results of his administration. The reports of Hatcliffe showed that the Irish revenues were insufficient even to cover the cost of the necessary English garrison, still less would they provide subsidies and bribes to the septs. The policy pursued by Poynings involved disbursements from the English treasury, and Henry intended that Ireland should pay its own way. Whether or no he realised that all Irish policies must be ineffectual without copious expenditure of English money and English effort, he was certain of one thing, that he had no English money to spare. He reverted therefore to the old cheap and tentative policy of ruling Ireland through a great Irish family. The Earl of Kildare was released from the Tower and sent back to Ireland as lord deputy. "All Ireland cannot rule yonder gentleman," said the Bishop of Meath. "No!" replied the king, who enjoyed the rough humour of his captive, "then he is meet to rule all Ireland."[1]

The siege of Waterford was raised on August 3, 1495, and during the next two months nothing certain was known as to the movements of the pretender. In this interval Henry summoned a parliament to meet at Westminster, and the session opened on October 14. The first statute passed pro-

[1] *Book of Howth*, p. 180 (*Calendar of Carew Manuscripts*, ed. 1871).

vided that no person assisting the king for the time being should be liable to impeachment or attainder, and that if any such attainder should be passed it should be void and of none effect. It was, of course, impossible for one parliament to bind its successor, and it was moreover implied that obedience might safely be rendered to the successful usurper, though it was expressly provided that all who should desert Henry in future should be excluded from its benefits. But the practical efficacy of the act was not impaired by such considerations. Discussions as to the validity of the royal title were at the root of civil disorder, and the country could have no peace so long as curious and busy minds were vexed with the question of the Tudor claims. A solemn announcement that the rightful King of England was the man who happened to be reigning, was equivalent to an advertisement that such discussions should henceforth cease. It may not have satisfied the scrupulous conscience of legitimists; it did not completely exorcise the spirit of sedition; it might even be construed as a confession that the technical claims of the new dynasty were best left in obscurity or twilight. But it was a kind of *eirenikon*, founded upon the rough practical common sense which generally commends itself to the English nation. CHAP. III.

Though war was probable, Henry asked for no war tax. Convocation, however, granted him a tenth, and parliament, besides adjudging to him the recently confiscated property of the Yorkist rebels, authorised the collection of the arrears of the last benevolence. As there was likely to be trouble in the north, a fixed sum was allocated to keep up the fortifications of Berwick and Carlisle, and the turbulent franchises of North and South Tynedale were incorporated in the county of Northumberland.

Most of Henry's difficulties were due to the fact that a political party at home aided by enemies abroad were speculating upon the social unrest in England. That unrest may no doubt chiefly be regarded as the legacy of the civil wars; but in part it was the result of economic changes which, while loosening the old industrial fabric in the towns, were converting England from a land of arable into a land of pasture. It was rendered specially dangerous owing to the fact that the whole male population of England possessed, or could easily come into possession

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of, weapons of offence. The pleadings held before the Star-chamber give us a glimpse, imperfect indeed but not the less valuable, of this armed and perilous lawlessness. A London draper declines to pay 4d. for every foot of ground occupied by his booth at the Salisbury fair. The bishop's under-bailiff lies in wait for him outside the town with three mounted men, muffled and armed "with swords and bucklers, spears, and other defensible weapons," and he has to ride for his life. A copy-holder of the Abbey of Malmesbury refuses to pay pannage; he pleads that John Wotton, the cellarer of the abbey, came with a company of servants "armed with bows, arrows, swords, bucklers, great clubs, and other weapons," broke down the door and evicted him from his messuage. A London cordwainer can gather some forty ruffians to make life impossible for all foreigners in the parish of St. Clement's. Where rioting is chronic, little can be effected by sporadic punishments however severe, and it is some proof of the political sagacity of the parliament of 1495 that it believed in something more substantial than a diet of riot acts. One of the main antecedent conditions of social disorder was vagabondage, a problem destined to engage the attention of the English legislature for the next hundred years. The parliament attacked it. Arguing that imprisonment was too costly a remedy for the disease, it enacted that vagabonds should be set in the stocks for three days and then dismissed. Beggars were to be despatched to their several hundreds, and games of hazard such as cards and dice, bowls and tennis were forbidden, save at Christmas time, to apprentices, or servants of husbandry, labourers, or journeymen. Justices of the peace were given power to regulate gaming-houses and alehouses, and "to reject and put away common ale-selling in towns where they shall think convenient". Another statute was prompted by the unwillingness of juries to present offenders owing to bribery or intimidation, and justices of the assize and of the peace were empowered to punish offences upon information without indictment. As the acts against rioting had not been observed, justices of the peace were required to certify heinous riots to the king and council.

Much, too, was done by this parliament to improve the administration of justice. It was enacted that writs might be served out by poor persons without payment, and that counsel

and attorneys should be assigned to them. An act was passed against perjury and unlawful maintenance, and another was aimed at the extortions of the sheriffs and their officers. They had been in the habit of surreptitiously multiplying the plaints against a defendant, and then upon his non-appearance at any court day of fining him 4d. on every count. The remedies devised by the statute of 1495 were sweeping, and if strictly administered must have been effective. It was provided that no plaint should be entered in the books of the county court save by the plaintiff in person or by his attorney, and only one plaint for one cause. The justices of the peace were given power to fine the sheriffs 40s. for every offence, and no amercements were to be levied by sheriffs or under-sheriffs "until such time as two justices of the peace have had the view and oversight of their books". A fine was imposed upon bailiffs of the hundred who failed to warn a defendant of any charge which might be preferred against him. CHAP. III.

Parliament had not sat seven weeks ere the trouble in the north assumed a menacing shape. On November 27, Perkin was sumptuously received at Stirling by the warlike James IV., who seems to have believed in the genuineness of his pretensions. Tournaments were held in honour of "Prince Richard of England" whose affability and handsome demeanour won all hearts. He was conducted in progress through the kingdom, given an allowance of £1,200 a year, and married to the beautiful Lady Catharine Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Huntly and through her mother nearly related to the royal family of Scotland. The sheriffs were ordered to prepare their levies for war.

It was a madcap undertaking. Henry was anxious for peace and had sent plenipotentiaries to treat for the marriage of his daughter Margaret with the Scottish king on June 23, 1495, but James was careful that nothing should come of these overtures. Yet the situation of European affairs was extremely unfavourable to a Scottish enterprise against England. The French conquest of Naples, so easily and brilliantly effected, had alarmed all the other powers of the west, and on March 30 of this year a Holy league, headed by the pope and joined by Maximilian and Ferdinand, by Venice and by Milan, had been signed at Venice for the rescue of Italy. It was now one of the

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This treaty, known in later times as the *Intercursus Magnus*, provided for a complete renewal of the old commercial intercourse between the two countries. No duties, save such as had been paid for the last fifty years, were to be laid upon the merchants of either nation, and all shackles upon trade were removed, save that power was reserved to either government to

lay duties upon its own subjects and to prohibit the exportation of food-stuffs in time of need. Englishmen might fish in Flemish, Flemings in English waters without impediment, licence, or safe-conduct. Both governments were to discourage piracy and to protect trade, and all hostilities were to be abandoned henceforth. It was specially provided that neither country should give countenance to the other's rebels, and that Margaret of Burgundy should be deprived of her dower lands, if she defied this arrangement. The treaty was disliked in London where it was regarded as being too favourable to the Low Countries; but whatever may have been the criticisms of the community which lived by wool and fish, the political advantages were immediate and substantial, for it closed to the Yorkist partisans the finest recruiting ground in Europe.

Meanwhile the French army had passed in and out of Italy like a storm in summer. Master of the Neapolitan kingdom for the brief space of three months, Charles had been compelled to turn northward in May, 1495, to meet the army of the league and to make good his communications with France. His withdrawal north of the Alps left the French army of occupation in Naples helpless and isolated, and by November all the kingdom save a few fortresses had passed into the hands of the Spaniards. But surprising and complete as the discomfiture of the French seemed to be, it was by no means accepted by them as a final criticism on the policy of Italian conquest. The French garrisons, who were still holding out at Ostia, at Gaeta, and at Asti, called for relief, and in the spring and summer of 1496 Charles was preparing for a second expedition. It now became doubly imperative for Spain to prevent the junction of England and France; and Puebla was ordered to conclude the English marriage, and to inform Henry that he might join the league without committing himself to fight France or to subsidise his allies. An arrangement so safe and economical commended itself to Henry's judgment, and on July 18, Robert Sherburne concluded at Rome the arrangements for his entry into the Holy league. Never had England occupied a more commanding position in European diplomacy.

Meanwhile James had determined to draw the sword for Perkin. Whether it be true, as Bothwell avowed, that the barons and people of Scotland were averse from the "young adventur-

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ousness"[1] of their king, James's raid across the border proved a complete failure. England was not to be conquered by a force of 1,400 men "of all manner of nations". Perkin, who had promised his patron the town of Berwick and 50,000 marks in the event of success, issued an artful proclamation denouncing the exactions and the cruelty of King Henry. But the ravages of his Scottish auxiliaries were not calculated to win him support, and his pleadings for mercy were met by a jest which became popular and famous. "Sir," said James, in words which may have been invented for him by Hall, "methinketh you take much pain and very much imagine how to preserve the realm of another prince which is not yours; but my mind giveth me that you be as far from the obtaining the same as you be near the soil and aspect of the country, considering that you call England your land and realm, and the inhabitants thereof your people and subjects, and yet not one man will once show himself to aid or assist you in the war begun for your cause and in your name." James appears to have penetrated no farther than four miles across the border. Upon the news of Lord Neville's approach with a force of 4,000 men, he broke up his camp at midnight and hurriedly recrossed the Tweed.[2]

Peace had been broken, and Henry was free to make reprisals. Bothwell had urged an invasion of Scotland, writing that James had coined his chairs, his plate, and his cupboards, that he had not a hundred pounds, that "there was never people worse content of the king's governance than they are now," and that many Scotsmen would be glad to see the late king's murder avenged. Henry was not vindictive, but he was fond of money, and the Scottish raid gave him an excellent pretext for raising it. On October 24 a great council met at Westminster, attended by the lords spiritual and temporal, by the sergeants at law, and by burgesses and merchants from all the cities and good towns of England. The council granted, or, perhaps it would be more accurate to say, pledged itself that parliament would grant a sum of £120,000 to be used against the Scots. Meanwhile the individual members of the council offered to lend the king considerable sums of money, and

[1] Ellis, *Original Letters*, first ser., vol. i., p. 29.

[2] Cotton MS., Vitellius A. xvi., f. 160; Kingsford, *Chronicles of London*, p. 210.

advised the borrowing of an additional advance of £40,000 upon privy seals. "We have determined us," wrote Henry, "to make by sea and by land two armies royal for a substantial war to be continued upon the Scots, unto such time as we shall invade the realm of Scotland in our own person." The city of London was asked for £10,000, and lent £4,000, and in all £57,388 10s. 2d. was raised by way of loan for the Scottish war. In the following January parliament met to confirm the grant. Admonished by Chancellor Morton of the virtues of the Romans and the Maccabees and of the perfidious treachery of the Scottish kings, they proceeded to untie the strings of the national purse. Two fifteenths and tenths were granted in the first instance, and as this was not sufficient a subsidy of equal amount was added. Care was, however, taken lest the burden should fall upon the poorer classes, and no one was to be assessed to the second tax whose annual income from land was less than 20s., or who possessed less than 10 marks' worth of personal property. CHAP. III.

The lavish grant of parliament met with an unexpected response. As Daubeny was preparing to cross the border at the head of an English army, an insurrection broke out in Cornwall. Why should the tillers and miners of one of the poorest counties in England be "grounded to powder with payments" for "a little stir of the Scots soon blown over". Two skilful agitators, Thomas Flamank, a lawyer of Bodmin, and Michael Joseph, a blacksmith, fanned the flames of discontent. The argument of Flamank, probably suggested by the third chapter of the second book of Littleton's *Tenures*, was that the defence of the Scottish border was already provided for by escuage, and devolved solely on those northern barons whose tenures bound them to undertake it. To tax Cornwall for the Scottish frontier was not only unjust, but illegal. An argument of a somewhat similar character was used long afterwards in connexion with ship-money, but while Hampden's opposition to Charles I. was based upon the broad principles of constitutional liberty, the pleadings of Flamank were founded upon narrow and provincial particularism. The Cornishmen accepting the word of their leaders that the exactions to which they were subject proceeded not from the will of the king, but from the machinations of his evil counsellors, Bray and Morton,

CHAP. III. determined to march to London, arms in hand, and demand their dismissal. Slaying a collector of the subsidy at Taunton, they passed on to Wells, where they found a new recruit and a new leader in Lord Audley, who may have been impoverished and embittered by the sudden ending of the Boulogne campaign. Bristol refused to admit the insurgents, but did not arrest their advance. They marched through Salisbury and Winchester to Kent, and it is an astonishing fact that after Henry had been on the throne for twelve years, a body of obscure rebels, armed with no better weapons than bills and bows, without cavalry or artillery, should have been able to traverse uncontested, save for a brief skirmish at Guildford, the whole breadth of southern England.

Kent was the classic soil of protests, a country, said Flamank, which had never been conquered, the home of "the freest people in England"; and the rude Cornishmen determined to put the word of their leader to the test. But the spirit of Wat Tyler and Jack Cade was no longer abroad in the garden of England. The Earl of Kent, Lord Abergavenny and Lord Cobham rallied the loyalist gentry, and as the countryfolk showed no disposition to rebel, discouragement and desertion spread through the Cornish ranks. Still the situation had its dangers. The rebels were 15,000 strong, and though they had studiously abstained from pillage on their march, they would hardly be so temperate, if they were once let loose among the opulent thoroughfares of London. For some days the city was in a wild panic, but as the king returned from Woodstock, as the nobles and gentry of the home counties flocked in to defend the capital, and as Daubeny, recalled from the north, marched his force on to St. George's Fields, the public confidence was steadied.

When the Cornishmen pitched their camp upon Blackheath in the afternoon of Friday, June 16, they must have looked down upon a sight calculated to give them pause. The city of London was armed, and some 25,000 men were encamped outside to defend it. Henry was with the army in St. George's Fields. With characteristic caution he had determined to wait for the enemy in his capital, calculating that their strength and courage would ooze away with every step of their misguided progress. But now the time was come to strike, and Henry

intended the blow to be decisive. Sending a division under Oxford, Essex, and Suffolk, to wheel round the right flank and rear of the enemy, he appears to have waited until it had reached the positions assigned to it, and then to have launched Daubeny against the bridge of Deptford which was held by an advanced detachment of the rebels. It was then Saturday, and the Cornishmen, who had passed the previous night in great agony and variance and had been given to understand that the battle was to be fought on the Monday, were taken unawares. Nevertheless, the fight was gallantly contested, and in the course of it Daubeny was taken and rescued. There could, however, be only one issue. The Cornishmen, ill-armed, outnumbered, and surrounded, were no match for their foe. Two thousand were slain, and the rest being unmounted fell into the hands of the victors. Among the prisoners were the three leaders of the enterprise, Audley, Flamank, and Joseph. Audley was led through the city in a torn paper coat, painted with his arms reversed, and beheaded on Tower Hill; the lawyer and the blacksmith were hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn. But this was all the blood that was shed. The remainder of the rebel host were pardoned by proclamation, an act of signal leniency when compared with the stern measures dealt out to the prisoners of Deal, as though, in Bacon's words, the king "made a great difference between people that did rebel upon wantonness and them that did rebel upon want".[1] CHAP. III.

Cheap and decisive as the victory had been, it did not prevent Henry from renewing his overtures to the Scots, and on July 4 instructions were given to Fox, Warham, and John Cartington to treat with James for the delivery of Perkin. If the Scottish king should decline to deliver his guest, he was to be urged first of all to send a solemn embassy of peace into England and then to come southward for a personal interview with the English king. The Scots were to make compensation for their raid, and the fulfilment of this condition was to be guaranteed by the instant delivery of Scottish hostages. If these conditions, however, should be unacceptable, the am-

[1] The City Chronicler (Cotton MS., Vitellius A. xvi., f. 163), who is here particularly well informed, reports that some of the host "were minded to have come to the king" but "the smith was of a contrary mind". After the battle "divers of the prisoners were sold, some for 12d. and some for more".

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bassadors were permitted to accept some offers which had been advanced on the Scottish side at a meeting held some time in the previous spring. But before the English ambassadors can have reached the Tweed, Perkin was no longer in Scotland and James had shot his bolt. Whether his decision to renew hostilities was connected with secret intelligences from Cornwall, or precipitated by the news of the Cornish outbreak, we have no means of determining. But it is clear that, despite the monitions of the Spanish envoy Pedro de Ayala, James was determined to make one last onslaught on Henry's throne. Sailing from Ayr on a Breton ship provided by the Scottish king, and escorted by the two boldest pirates of the age, Andrew and Robert Barton, Warbeck landed at Cork on July 26. That James intended him to proceed to England and most probably to Cornwall seems to be established, but it may at the same time have been thought advisable to rally the Irish Yorkists before essaying a descent upon the English coast. The turbulent Sir James Ormond had invited Warbeck once more to try his luck in Ireland, and though it was known that Kildare and Desmond had gone over to the king, some Irish malcontents might still be found to rally round the White Rose.

But this hope, if it was ever seriously entertained, vanished into thin air. Warbeck landed in Cork to find that Ormond had been slain in a brawl, and that the party of the White Rose was as dead as he. The citizens of Waterford, their appetite stimulated by a royal reward, scented him out, learnt his designs on Cornwall, and communicated them to the king. Cork was no safe place for the pretender. He was a fugitive with a price on his head and the country against him. What his adventures in Ireland were we have no means of knowing, but in the third week of August, 1497, two Biscayan vessels and a Breton pinnace were making sail for the Bristol Channel, with four Waterford vessels in hot pursuit. In one of the Spanish merchantmen was the last hope of the Yorkist cause with his wife and his children.

Meanwhile, on August 10, war broke out upon the border, and while his light horsemen were ravaging the bishopric of Durham, the King of Scotland sat down with his main force before Norham castle. That great border fortress had been well prepared by Bishop Fox of Durham to stand a siege,

and before any sensible impression was made upon its walls the Earl of Surrey with nearly 20,000 men was hurrying up from Yorkshire to relieve it, while an English fleet under Lord Brooke was preparing to take reprisals on the Scottish coast. James, unprepared for so vigorous a response, hastily broke up his camp and was followed into Scotland by the English army. The campaign of Surrey though brief was successful, and Ayton Castle, one of the strongest places between Edinburgh and Berwick, capitulated to the English after a day's bombardment, and was razed to the ground. "The Scottish king," says Hall, "was within a mile of the siege, and both knew it and saw the smoke, and yet would not once set a foot forward to save his castle." But James was no coward. He offered to fight Surrey "puissance against puissance" or "person to person," on the understanding that if the victory should fall to Scotland, Berwick should be the prize. The earl replied that he would gladly fight, but that the town of Berwick was the king's and not his, and that he could not pledge it without his master's consent; and James, "not regarding his offers nor performing his great cracks and boasts, shamefully and suddenly fled in the night season with all his power and company". The retreat of the English host was hardly less precipitate, and a week of rain and wind drove it back again to Berwick. But though there had been no decisive action, and the English troops were disbanded after their brief campaign, the events of these two months determined James to peaceful counsels. Twice he had crossed the border, and twice had he been forced to retreat. The Cornish insurrection, upon which he had rashly built hopes, had been completely crushed, and though Daubeny had been withdrawn southwards, the forces at Surrey's disposal were quite sufficient to guard the Tweed and to visit the sins of Scottish raiders upon the much-enduring lowlands. The mediation of the Spanish ambassador Ayala facilitated an arrangement, and on September 30, a seven years' truce was signed at Ayton, which on December 5 was extended to the lifetime of the two sovereigns.

The news of the disaster at Blackheath must have spread through the west county, and indeed some of the beaten army may have returned to their mines or their plough-lands before Warbeck sighted the granite cliffs of Cornwall; and it is a

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proof of the disturbed condition of the west that ten days after landing he was able to appear before the walls of Exeter with a force of some 6,000 to 8,000 men. But Henry, who had been warned of his intentions as early as August 5, had made ample preparation to cope with the rebellion. Daubeny was hurrying westward with the levies of Gloucestershire and South Wales, of Wiltshire, Hampshire, Somerset, and Dorset; and the king, who had gathered an army at Woodstock, was following Daubeny at a more leisurely rate. Brooke's fleet was ordered to scour the Channel and secure the ports. The gentry of the west country, the Courtenays, the Carews, the Edgecombes, and the Fulfords flocked into Exeter, and under the leadership of the Earl of Devon were prepared to resist a siege. The contest was so unequal as to be ridiculous. Perkin had no siege train, and apparently the greater part of his army were harnessed only on the right arm. For a day and a half, September 17-18, they assaulted the gates of Exeter, with no better weapons of offence than stones, crowbars, and bonfires. Not a man of the garrison was slain. Then, leaving some 400 of their comrades dead on the field, they marched off discouraged but unmolested to Taunton. There Perkin's courage failed him. Daubeny had reached Glastonbury, not twenty miles away, and Perkin dared not ask his men to face a second edition of Blackheath. At midnight on the 21st, he stole from the camp with sixty followers, and rode for his life to the coast. The news of the escape must have reached Daubeny on the following morning, and 500 horsemen were sent in pursuit of the fugitives. The main body was overtaken, but Perkin, riding with three followers across the New Forest, possibly in hopes of finding a friendly merchantman in Southampton water, reached the banks of the Exe. The river may have been guarded, or the hue and cry close behind. But the great Abbey of Beaulieu was at hand with its spacious rights of asylum granted by Innocent III., and recently confirmed by Richard, and the hunted men registered themselves to the sanctuary. Finding, however, that the king's servants had tracked them to their lair, and that all the country was warned to make watch, Perkin and his companions determined to throw themselves on Henry's mercy, in the hope of receiving a full pardon.

On October 5 the pretender was brought before the king at

Taunton and, in the presence of all the nobles in attendance, made a full confession of his life history. Henry then proceeded to Exeter, to receive the submission of the rebellious counties. "The commons of this shire of Devon," he wrote to the mayor and citizens of Waterford, "come dayly before us in great multitudes in their shirts, the foremost of them having halters about their necks, and full humble, with lamentable cries for our grace and remission submit themselves unto us; whereupon ordering first the chief stirrers and doers to be tried out of them for to abide their corrections accordingly, we grant unto the residue generally our said grace and pardon; and our commissioners the Earl of Devon, our chamberlain, and our steward of household law, have done and do daily likewise in our county of Cornwall."[1] But though Henry showed singular clemency in the matter of death-penalties, he was determined to bring home to the rebels a sense of their misdemeanours. More than £9,000 was collected in fines from the five counties of Somerset, Dorset, Wilts, Hants, and Devon, and even as late as 1500 many debtors were being tried for arrears. All who had aided or favoured the Cornishmen either in their first or in their second march were required to contribute heavily to the royal exchequer. The citizens of Wells were fined over £300; the citizens of Taunton over £400; the Abbot of Athelney paid 100 marks; Sir John Speke of Whitlackynton £200. When it is remembered that the rebel armies lived not upon plunder but upon the good-will of the countryside, it will be seen that pretexts for amercement must have been numerous and tempting.[2]

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Travelling eastward, "not without a great concourse of people meeting him out of every quarter to see this Perkin as he were a monster," Henry arrived at Westminster on November 27. The pretender was compelled to repeat his confession, and was then led through the city to the Tower. His beautiful and charming wife, who had been discovered by the king's officers at St. Michael's Mount, had already been sent, under an escort of "sad matrons and gentlewomen," to grace the household of the queen. There she was treated with the

[1] C. Smith, *Waterford*, p. 135.

[2] Rymer, xii., 696-98, 766; *Letters and Papers, Rich. III. and Hen. VII.*, ii., 335-37.

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honour and consideration due to her birth. Resuming her maiden name, Lady Catharine Gordon received a pension, and the expenses of her wardrobe were defrayed by the king. For eleven years she lived at the court upon the romance and humiliation of her girlhood, and then in quick succession married three husbands—James Strangeways, a gentleman usher of the king's chamber; Sir Matthew Cradock, a Glamorganshire squire; and Christopher Ashton, another gentleman of the chamber. A daughter by her second marriage is the ancestress of the Earls of Pembroke.

The fate of her first love was very different. Warbeck, too, had charm, and if the love-letter ascribed to him be genuine, he could turn a phrase like a courtier. That he was quick to learn and ingenious to contrive is proved by the wonderful success of his imposture; but he had none of the qualities which make a leader of men. He was neither soldierly, nor brave, nor steadfast, and however amiable his intentions may have been originally, he must have been demoralised by his campaign of deceit. A curious letter, full of *naïveté*, written to his mother from Exeter, confirms the statements made in his confession, and we need not doubt that he was originally forced into the imposture against his will.[1] Perhaps it is true that before leaving Scotland he made a secret arrangement with Ayala to abandon his enterprise, and that conspirators of stronger will than his again deflected his intentions. Timid natures are subject to be swept along by gusts of panic; and Warbeck was timid. But having once tasted power and liberty, he could not be content with a life under surveillance, and his restless intrigues were destined to bring him to the block. His adventures only seemed to strengthen Henry's position, and to reveal Henry's consummate capacity. The king had never lost his head; had never abused victory; had never missed an occasion of sparing the blood of his subjects. He had tried by diplomatic resource to isolate his enemy; and he had been favoured by the turn of affairs. His methods were often crafty and dishonourable; but he lived in a world of craft and questionable devices, and at least his standard was higher than that of Louis XI. Personal popularity he never

[1] The letter is printed by Mr. Gairdner, *History of the Life and Reign of Richard III.*, pp. 329-30.

obtained, and the vice of avarice, first conspicuously displayed in 1495, grew steadily upon him. But if he was not a favourite with his people, he was alert in his study of the popular temper, knowing what his subjects would stand, and careful not to transgress the limit. "My masters of Ireland," he is reported to have said once to some lords of the Pale, "ye will crown apes at last," and the spirit of humorous contempt embalmed in this famous phrase is characteristic of his whole attitude during a period of anxieties calculated to sour the temper and perplex the judgment of less discerning men.

CHAPTER IV.

FOREIGN AND COMMERCIAL POLICY.

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To outside observers the victory of Blackheath followed by the capture of Perkin appeared to have established the Tudor dynasty firmly upon the throne. The Milanese envoy Soncino, writing on September 8, 1497, to his master, spoke with confidence of the outlook. "The kingdom," he said, "is perfectly stable by reason first of the king's wisdom, whereof every one stands in awe; and secondly on account of the king's wealth; for I am informed that he has upwards of six millions of gold and it is said that he puts by annually five hundred thousand ducats." The truth was that the new flame of Italian conquest which had caught hold of the imagination and the policy of France cleared away a good many traditional perils from the path of England. As France was anxious to be assured of Henry's neutrality in order that she should not be molested by England in the prosecution of her southern policy, so Spain was anxious to fortify the new dynasty in order that the King of England might be free to help her on the continent, free to prevent Charles becoming "King of Italy," free to prevent the pope from becoming Charles's "sacristan". The internal stability of England became therefore a matter of intimate concern to the court of Spain. That Arthur should ascend the English throne, that he should marry Catharine, that his sister Margaret should wed the King of Scotland, that an end should be made of Yorkist intrigues and Yorkist pretenders, and Scottish raids on the border, was considered to be almost as essential to the permanent emancipation of Italy from French control as the triumphs of Cordova's infantry in the Neapolitan kingdom.

It is true that for the moment these splendid troops had carried all before them, that France, foiled in Italy and threat-

ened on the Pyrenean border, was glad to come to terms, that an armistice was signed at Lyons on February 27, 1497, and that on August 5, 1498, a treaty was agreed upon at Marcoussis, based in reality though not explicitly upon the policy of dividing the Neapolitan kingdom between France and Spain. But although the desertion of Ferdinand broke up the Holy league and seemed to portend a subversion of all the political relations of the western states, this was in reality not the case. Louis XII., the new lord of France—for Charles had died suddenly on April 7, 1498—was that Louis of Orleans who had played so turbulent and unscrupulous a part during the troubles of Brittany. But once seated on the throne he adopted the policy of his predecessor. Divorcing his own wife he married Charles's widow, Anne of Brittany, and secured the continuance of the union between that province and France. As Duke of Orleans he had laid claim to the Milanese in the right of an ancestress, Valentina Visconti, and he now boldly adopted the title of Duke of Milan. It was clear that at an early opportunity Italy might expect to suffer a new French invasion, an invasion better prepared and more skilfully led than the brilliant but ineffectual raid of Charles VIII. The proposal that Spain should have a slice of the spoil was an unscrupulous insurance against risk; but the risk remained, and Ferdinand was shrewd enough to see that if a corrupt and secret bargain with France was one form of insurance an open alliance with England was another. In the treaty of Marcoussis the right to assist England was fully reserved to Spain. CHAP. IV.

Meanwhile Henry had drawn closer to France. His adherence to the Holy league had gratified Spain and obtained for him a sword and a cap of maintenance from the pope, but it had neither involved him in military engagements abroad, nor had it prevented the signature of a commercial treaty between the two countries in May, 1497. France had political reasons for cultivating Henry's friendship, and Henry had pecuniary reasons for standing well with France, for so long as the treaty of Etaples was in force English courtiers drew pensions, and the English king received a revenue from the French treasury. But it was an alliance unseasoned by generosity or goodwill. Next year, when Henry learnt that Charles was dead, he told De Puebla that it was most desirable that civil war should break

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out in France and Brittany, that he had sent two spies over, one of whom had gone to de Rohan, and that if divisions were to break out he would without loss of time invade the kingdom to reconquer what belonged to him by right. Soon after a messenger came from Maximilian to entreat Henry not to allow an occasion of attacking his old enemy to slip by. Henry, who had some reason for questioning "the constancy, veracity, and perseverance" of his correspondent, replied in his sardonic way, that he should "like to see the King of the Romans at war with France, but only by way of witnessing his wonderful feats and not in order to take part himself in the enterprise". That interesting spectacle was, however, denied to him, for Maximilian was helpless without the active support of Burgundy or the league. Everything combined to secure for Louis XII. a peaceful accession. A solemn funeral service was celebrated for the late King of France in St. Paul's cathedral, and on July 14, 1498, the treaty of Etaples was renewed in Paris, with the article against the reception of English rebels made additionally stringent.

In the history of English diplomacy there are few alliances more momentous than those contracted with Spain and with Scotland upon the subsidence of the civil troubles. Every boy of fifteen and upwards might remember how Spain had suddenly sprung into the first rank of European powers; how she had driven the Moors from their mountain fastnesses, and captured the heathen capital of Granada; how she had sent galleys across the Atlantic Ocean and discovered islands of fabulous wealth; how her veterans, hardened in the Moorish campaigns, had swept the famous French chivalry out of Naples, and revealed to Europe the existence of a military instrument as tenacious, as hardy, and as formidable as the mercenaries of the Alps. That the heir to the English throne should wed a Spanish infanta was a pledge that the Tudor dynasty, however much contested might be its claims, would at least receive the support of a great power in defending them. That the alliance was founded upon a substantial community of interest is proved by its continuance for a space of forty years. That it was ultimately shattered was due to a coincidence of forces so strange, so powerful, and so various that in the act of severance England was swept away from her immemorial moorings to the Church

of Rome. The marriage treaty with Scotland was of a different nature, but it was almost equally fertile in immediate benefit, and far more important in its ultimate results. Out of it sprang the union of the two crowns, and out of the union of the two crowns proceeded the fiscal and legislative union of the two kingdoms. It may therefore be regarded as the first important step towards the political consolidation of Great Britain which had been taken since the establishment of the national parliament at the end of the thirteenth century. CHAP. IV.

There is no circumstance more characteristic of the political standards of the age, than the manner and spirit in which these two large transactions were conducted. In view of the great interests involved, it might have been expected that the diplomacy would have been cordial or at least dignified, that minute occasions of friction would have been carefully avoided, and that every effort would have been made to reach a settlement by the smoothest and most direct route. The very reverse proved to be the case. No sharp-witted, close-fisted huckster chaffering his wares at a country fair could have shown a keener desire to save a halfpenny than the King of England, and no peasants who ever drove their cart to market were more sharp-witted and close-fisted than the King and Queen of Spain. The amount of the marriage portion, the time at which it should be paid, the arrangement for the valuation of that portion of it which was to be paid in kind, the extent of the dower, the reduction or retention of English duties on Spanish merchandise: these considerations gave matter for protracted and anxious debate. In both treaties the pecuniary advantage of the King of England was safeguarded with the most minute and suspicious particularity, and an ineffaceable impression of meanness is imprinted on the two alliances which form the most enduring achievement of Henry's diplomacy.

The marriage treaty between Prince Arthur and the Infanta Catharine was first signed in London on October 1, 1496, and then finally ratified by Henry on July 18, 1497. It was settled, in accordance with the agreement made at Medina del Campo eight years earlier, that the princess should come to England when Prince Arthur had attained his fourteenth year, and that she should succeed to the throne of Castile in the event of the other children of Ferdinand and Isabella dying without heirs.

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The marriage portion was to be 200,000 crowns, half of which was to be paid in money within ten days before or after the celebration of the marriage, while the remainder was to be paid in two equal instalments in the two succeeding years. The dower was to consist of the third part of the revenues of Wales, Cornwall, and Chester. As an interval of three years would elapse before the arrival of the princess in England—for Arthur's fifteenth birthday was not till 1500—a curious luxury of precautions was indulged in, lest the treaty should be evaded. There was first of all a solemn betrothal at Woodstock. This was in August, 1497. There was then a second ratification of the treaty by the Spanish sovereigns at Alcalà. This was in February, 1498. There followed an appeal to the pope from both parties that a dispensation might be granted for a formal marriage by proxy before the children had reached a marriageable age. This was in the spring of the same year. And finally there were no less than two formal marriages by proxy, in each of which the place of the absent princess was filled by De Puebla, probably the most undignified envoy who ever represented a great country in a foreign land.

In the midst of these matrimonial transactions the court was suddenly alarmed by the discovery that Perkin had escaped from custody. For the second time the pretender made for the coast, and for the second time he was turned back and forced to take sanctuary. His refuge on this occasion was the priory of Sheen, and here he prevailed upon the prior to entreat the king that his life might be spared. Henry, despite the advice of some of his counsellors, acceded to the request, but an opportunity was taken for a fresh advertisement of the imposture. After sitting for a whole day in the stocks upon a scaffold erected in Palace Yard, Westminster, and also reading aloud his confession, Perkin was called upon to repeat the performance at Cheapside. He was then transported to a dungeon in the Tower, where, in the words of the Spanish ambassador, he could "see neither moon nor sun".

It is a curious fact that after so many plots had been baffled, and so many conspiracies disclosed, men should still have been found willing to risk their lives in a new campaign of imposture. In the spring of 1499 a certain Patrick, an Augustinian friar from the border of Suffolk, worked upon

the ambition of a young man named Ralph Wilford, the son of a London cordwainer, and persuaded him to personate the Earl of Warwick. Kent, a county which in the words of Hall "hath not been dull in setting forth of new phantastical fantasies," was selected as the scene most congenial to the propaganda, and for the third time Kent deceived expectations. The plot was discovered, and while Patrick, protected by his orders, was consigned to perpetual imprisonment, Wilford was hanged on February 12. We do not know what were the ramifications of this new conspiracy, but there can be no doubt that it made a deep impression upon Henry's mind. About six weeks after Wilford's execution, Don Pedro de Ayala wrote that the king had been consulting a soothsayer, and that he had been informed that his wife would be in great danger during the year. In the space of a fortnight he seemed to have aged twenty years. He had grown very devout; he had heard a sermon every day in Lent, and had continued his devotions for the remainder of the day. We cannot affirm, but we may hazard a conjecture as to the secret cause of this agitation of soul. Pressure was being put upon Henry to send the Earl of Warwick to the block. We can easily imagine the kind of argument which would have been used by Henry's counsellors, both English and Spanish, to persuade him to commit so great a crime. It would be represented that so long as the earl lived he would be a centre for rebellion, and a source of insecurity to the Tudor line. It would be urged that the sovereigns of Spain could hardly be expected to give their daughter to a prince who might never succeed to his father's throne, or who having succeeded might be driven from it. By a plausible system of casuistry it would be shown that the welfare of the kingdom was bound up with the stability of the dynasty, and that the stability of the dynasty could only be procured by Warwick's death. That the Spanish sovereigns were deeply disquieted by the Yorkist conspiracies is amply proved by the correspondence of Puebla, and that Henry knew of their disquietude is equally certain. When the news came that Perkin was taken at Sheen, the first thing which the king did was to send a gentleman of the chamber to advertise Puebla of the fact, and when a nobler head than Perkin's fell upon the block, the Spanish envoy hastened to assure his master and mistress

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that not "a doubtful drop of royal blood" remained in the kingdom.

Our knowledge of the dark tragedy which follows rests ultimately upon the word of an informer. According to testimony given at the Guildhall on November 21, and seemingly given by one Robert Cleymound "of London, gentleman," concerning whom nothing is known, three men met together on August 2 in the Earl of Warwick's chamber in the Tower. The first was Warwick, the second Cleymound, and the third a certain Thomas Astwode, who had been an adherent of Perkin, had received a pardon in 1495, and was now employed as one of Perkin's guardians. These three men agreed together to contrive an escape and a political revolution. The king's treasury was to be seized, the store of powder provided for the guns of the Tower was to be fired, and then while the king's men were coping with the conflagration, Warwick and his party would take ship with the jewels and treasure. Once across the Channel they would bide their time, but meanwhile a proclamation issued from the Tower was to promise twelve pence a day to all who would come to them "to raise and move men against the King for the purpose of depriving him of his royal dignity". The evidence, in other words, was intended to prove not merely an attempt at an escape but a clear and palpable act of high treason.

"My lord," said Cleymound to the earl, "you are well-minded in what labour, sadness, and duresse you here remain; but if you will help yourself according to the form and effect of the communication and discourse laid between us, you shall come out of this prison with me. I will take you out of all danger, and leave you in surety." Cleymound then gave the earl a hanger, with which to defend himself when the hour came. It chanced, or perhaps it may have so been designed, that Warwick's chamber was just over Perkin's, and Cleymound with the assent of the earl knocked on the floor and called down to the prisoner below, "Perkin, be of good cheer and comfort". Fuller communication ensued between the two cells. Cleymound told Perkin that he had a letter for him sent from one James, a clerk in Flanders, which he would deliver on the following day. Warwick made a hole in the floor, "through the which hole the said earl on the said day and

year and many subsequent times spoke to the said Peter, adhering to and comforting him, saying to him 'How goes it with you? Be of good cheer.'" Whether Astwode was the only warder implicated in the plot, we have no means of knowing; but Cleymound appears to have been able to move freely between the two alleged chiefs of the conspiracy. CHAP. IV.

According to the evidence given in the Guildhall,—and that it proceeded from Cleymound is rendered probable by his subsequent acquittal,—Cleymound informed the earl that Perkin was anxious to have the Tower seized from Simon Digby the lieutenant. It would appear, however, that the earl was still insufficiently compromised. On August 2 Cleymound appeared in his cell with the alarming and improbable tidings that Perkin had divulged the plot to the king and council, and had reported the names of Warwick, Cleymound, and Astwode. Cleymound had fled to sanctuary. He had thought of Colchester, but Thomas Ward, a priest to whom "he had told all the things he had declared to the earl," had advised him to take refuge in Westminster, and to this Cleymound had consented. Could not Warwick give Cleymound a token which he might exhibit to Ward, "in order that the said Thomas Ward should be friendly and aiding to the said Robert Cleymound and all the friends of the said earl". Warwick fell into the trap. He gave Cleymound an image of wood—received, according to one account, from another conspirator, Walter Bluet,—a cloak, and a jacket of velvet. Were not these objects destined to serve as evidence of guilt?[1]

We have no means of sifting the testimony which was given in the Guildhall. It is a suspicious tale on the face of it, and not a syllable has survived of explanation or defence. But though the story excites scepticism, it was admirably calculated to secure convictions. On November 16, Perkin, together with two of his earliest associates, John Taylor, who had been handed over to Henry by the King of France, and John Waters, the Mayor of Cork, were put upon their trial, found guilty of treason, and sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. Two days afterwards eight minor accomplices, including Astwode and Bluet, were put upon their trial. Five

[1] *Third Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records* (Appendix ii.), pp. 216-18.

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were condemned and two suffered death. The last scene in this lurid judicial drama was enacted on November 21 in Westminster Hall when Edward, Earl of Warwick, was tried for high treason. The Earl of Oxford, his uncle by marriage, presided over the court as lord steward, and into his hands the Lord Mayor of London and the grand jury came to deliver the indictment. Then the sergeant-at-arms called out the names of the peers who had been summoned to form the court, and the trial began. We would fain know something of the emotions in the London streets and of the audience of Westminster Hall while this tragic young figure was enduring his brief moment of open air and anguish. The poor lad, his will and intelligence enfeebled and obscured by fifteen years of close confinement, pleaded guilty to the charge against him, and judgment was given. It was to the effect that "the said Earl of Warwick should be taken to the Tower of London and from thence drawn through the middle of London to the gallows at Tyburn and there hanged, cut down, disembowelled, and quartered in the usual manner". The sentence was carried out on the 28th at Tower Hill.

Zurita, the Spanish historian, tells us that the populace was incensed at Warwick's death, and regarded him as innocent of the design which was laid to his charge; that it was generally believed that his death was the king's doing, and that the more the king justified himself, the keener was the suspicion of his subjects.[1] The tragedy was indeed calculated to move all hearts, and in the whole range of English history no more blameless victim has been offered upon the shrine of political prudence. It is said by Bacon, who is here doubtless embroidering upon the earlier narrative of Hall, that Henry attempted to shift the odium upon the shoulders of his new ally, the King of Spain, and that "there were letters shewed out of Spain whereby in the passages concerning the treaty of marriage Ferdinando had written to the king in plain terms that he saw no assurance of his succession so long as the Earl of Warwick lived, and that he was loth to lend his daughter to troubles and dangers". The story has been doubted on the ground that no such letters have been preserved, but Henry could have procured had he chosen, and Zurita's statement seems to indicate that he did so, a statement

[1] *Annales de Aragon*, v., 170 *a*.

from Puebla that the Spanish marriage would be expedited by Warwick's death. If this be so, Bacon is right in saying that "a kind of malediction" rested on the marriage. Long afterwards, when the Spanish girl, whose destiny was so strangely mingled with English history, had grown to middle age and had begun to taste the bitterness of repudiation, she is reputed to have said that "she had not offended, but it was a judgment of God, for that her former marriage was made in blood".[1]

The last prince of the Yorkist house had fallen, and Puebla wrote off to Spain in glee that England had never been so tranquil and obedient. The arrangements for the marriage were pushed on, and it was expected that the princess would land in the course of the summer of 1500. But even yet side winds came to perplex and ruffle the course of the negotiations. The king's council haggled over the treaty of alliance, wishing to pledge Spain to help England towards the recovery of its French possessions, and but for the king's intervention the treaty would not have been concluded. In May Henry and his queen passed over to Calais to meet the Archduke Philip, and negotiations were opened at St. Omer to define the political issues which were to be the subject of arrangement at the personal interview. There were many substantial reasons why Philip and Henry should make their peace. The Great Intercourse had laid down the general principles of commercial agreement between England and Flanders, but many minor occasions of friction had arisen since it was concluded. The ambitions of Louis XII., who in the previous year had conquered the Duchy of Milan, were viewed with some alarm by the son of Maximilian; and on Henry's side the friendship of Flanders, securing as it might be made to do the extradition of rebels, was always valuable. The conference held in St. Peter's Church on June 9 was both political and commercial. Marriages were projected between Henry, Duke of York, the king's second son, and Margaret, the daughter of the archduke, and again between Charles, the archduke's eldest son, and Mary, the second daughter of the King of England, and a commercial settlement was arrived at. There was enough in the situation to illumine the watchful lamps of Spanish jealousy, and a special envoy, Fuenzalida, Knight Commander of Haro, was sent over to England to

[1] Bacon, *History of King Henry VII.*, p. 179.

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ascertain whether the hand of Arthur had been surreptitiously pledged away. The rumour proved to be unfounded. Fuenzalida learnt that the English were eager for the arrival of Catharine, and that great preparations had been made for her reception. The Spanish court was reassured; efforts were made to create a Spanish party among the English nobility, and the princess was promised for the ensuing year. It was specially requested that her retinue of ladies should be of gentle birth and beautiful, "or at least that none of them should be ugly".

In the suite which followed the king and queen to Calais there were two persons whose attendance might serve to exhibit the euthanasia of disloyalty, the Lady Catharine Gordon and the Earl of Suffolk. Edmund de la Pole, second son of John Duke of Suffolk, by Elizabeth, sister of Edward IV., was the brother and the heir of that Earl of Lincoln who had fallen at Stoke. He had succeeded to a diminished inheritance, and finding his fortune insufficient to support the dignity of duke, had entered into an indenture with the king, by which he agreed to renounce his father's title and to be known in future as the Earl of Suffolk. This document, dated February 26, 1493, was two years later enrolled as an act of parliament. An enumeration was then made of the duke's lands which were retained by the king, and the earl's lands which were restored to Suffolk; and from this it would appear that the larger part of the Suffolk inheritance was permitted to pass to Edmund de la Pole. Half measures are proverbially dangerous, and Suffolk, a hot-tempered and ambitious youth, fretted under a sense of injury. The owner of forty-six manors longed for his lost acres, his lost dukedom. Condemned to pay a heavy fine of £5,000 for the lands restored to him, he was forced to mortgage a part of his estate; and to these pecuniary losses was added a slur upon his status as a peer. In 1498, he was indicted for manslaughter in the court of king's bench, and though the prosecution was dropped, the sense of indignity remained. Suffolk fled over the sea on July 1, 1499, and after staying with Sir James Tyrrell, governor of Guisnes, passed into Flanders. To quit the country without the king's permission was in itself an offence in an English subject, and the circumstances of Suffolk's flight savoured of treason. Sir George Neville, "the Bastard," his hair whitened by an Odyssey of

treason, was lurking on the continent with a knot of needy and restless exiles, and the appearance of a man of Suffolk's rank and pretensions south of the Channel would be the signal for a general rally of the broken fragments of the Yorkist cause. The king sent messengers to represent to Suffolk the desperate folly of his courses, and to induce him, and, if possible, Sir James Tyrrell as well, to return to England. In the case of Suffolk these solicitations were successful, and that ill-balanced but popular descendant of Geoffrey Chaucer again figured at the court.[1]

The voyage of the infanta had been delayed first by a Moorish insurrection, then by illness, and finally by a hurricane; and it was not until the afternoon of October 2, 1501, that Catharine sailed into Plymouth Hoe and set foot for the first time on English soil. As soon as the intelligence was received, the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood rode in to do her honour. The enthusiasm was genuine, and the welcome unchilled by long postponement. "She could not," wrote one of her attendants, "have been received with greater rejoicings if she had been the Saviour of the world." On November 15 she was married to Prince Arthur in St. Paul's cathedral. The capital, which for months had been looking forward to this event, surrendered itself to festivity. Jousts and masques, banquets and games continued steadily for a space of ten days. Westminster Hall, draped with costly arras, was given over to mummery and dancing. Lists were made in Palace Yard, where the nobility might tilt under the eyes of the royal family and the city fathers. Mock mermaids and mountains, bowls and archery, "courtly roundes and pleasant dances," a Spanish tumbler showing "many wondrous and delicious points of tumbling, dancing, and other sleights"; "a child of the Chapel singing right sweetly with quaint harmony": such were the amusements of Henry's court. No one could say that the arrival of the foreign princess had not been saluted with due honour.

All through this period of festivity the king's peace of mind must have been vexed by a new source of anxiety. While Catharine's litter was travelling towards Corunna, the Earl of Suffolk escaped for the second time to the continent, accompanied on this occasion by his brother Richard. Unversed

[1] *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, N.S., xvi., 133-35; xviii., 157 ff.

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in high politics, but well-connected and possessed of considerable influence in the eastern counties, Suffolk seems to have believed that if he could obtain foreign aid he could overturn Henry's throne. In this delusion he was encouraged by some intelligence from the court of Maximilian. Two years before Sir Robert Curzon, the governor of the fortress of Hamme in the Marches of Calais, had obtained leave to fight in the Turkish wars under the banner of Maximilian. Curzon was one of those who felt a lively sympathy for the victims of Henry's policy. He spoke to the King of the Romans of "the murders and tyrannies" practised by the King of England, and of my lord of Suffolk's purpose to recover his right; and Maximilian, who was not a man of accurate measures, let fall some words which encouraged Suffolk to repair to his court. The possession of a genuine pretendant to the English throne was always a useful asset to a foreign prince. Suffolk received fair promises of men and money, and was recommended to take up his station at Aix-la-Chapelle. But meanwhile Maximilian, so far from being in a position to draw the sword in his behalf, was actually engaged in negotiations with England, for he was desirous of obtaining from the deep pocket of Henry VII. an advance of 50,000 crowns for his Turkish war.

The eastern problem had risen into fresh prominence owing to the sudden outbreak of hostilities between the Porte and Venice in 1499. The Turks defeated the Venetian navy, took Lepanto, raided through Carniola and Friuli, and then set themselves to drive the Venetians from the Morea. A thrill of alarm passed through the world of Latin Christianity. If the crescent should wave over Venice herself, would not Rome be the next victim? Pope Alexander VI. was an able man of affairs, but unfortunately the affairs which he was at this time chiefly bent on forwarding were those of his son Cesare Borgia, and though some of the jubilee funds were transmitted to Venice, the greater portion was devoted to the promotion of Cesare's fortunes. At the end of 1501 a papal envoy, by name Gaspar Pons, appeared in England partly to sell indulgences to persons who had been unable to make the jubilee pilgrimage to Rome, and partly to urge the king to lead a crusade against the Moslem. Henry permitted the collection to be made and himself contributed a sum of £4,000.

The province of Canterbury voted £12,000, that of York a tenth of clerical revenue towards the holy war. But to the request that he should conduct a crusade in person, Henry replied in language of grave irony. He would deeply regret a Turkish invasion of Italy. For his part he was at peace with all Christian princes. Considerations of space forbade his assisting in the praiseworthy design, for even the Venetian galleys required seven months for their passage to England. The Germans and Hungarians, the Bohemians and the Poles, being nearer the scene of action and acquainted with Turkish methods of warfare, were those upon whom the defence properly devolved. A small subsidy was, however, sent, not without precautions and delays, to the King of Hungary.

The method of dealing with a situation such as that which was now created by Suffolk's reception at the Imperial Court was by this time thoroughly established. Information was collected from spies, a handful of prominent suspects was arrested and imprisoned, fugitive adherents of the traitor were tempted from their allegiance by bribes, and while localities favourable to his cause were accurately watched, all the diplomatic batteries were brought to bear. Four months before Suffolk's second flight Henry had issued pardons to Sir George Neville and thirteen other refugees in the hope of tempting them back to their allegiance. The device had failed; the men declined Henry's offer to remit fines and grant an amnesty, and when Suffolk set foot on the continent they clustered round him. But it was in Henry's power to strike a crushing blow at the conspiracy; and not long after Suffolk's flight had been ascertained, his most prominent relatives and friends, William de la Pole his brother, Lord William Courtenay, son of the Earl of Devon, his cousin by marriage, Sir John Wyndham, and Sir James Tyrrell were placed under lock and key. De la Pole and Courtenay remained prisoners during the remainder of Henry's reign; Tyrrell and Wyndham, and a few persons of minor importance, suffered on the scaffold. That the conspiracy was promptly suppressed may be inferred from the fact that only sixteen persons were attainted in connexion with it. Some of them were squires from Norfolk and Suffolk, two were Hampshire yeomen, one was a mariner from Beaulieu, and one a clerk from London. The spirit of disaffection seems to have been

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specially strong in Kent, where there was a wild plot for smuggling a child named James Ormond out of the kingdom, with a view to pressing his claims to sovereignty either in England or Ireland. But the fermentation was secret and the conspirators timid. The Earl of Oxford and Lord Willoughby had been sent round at the beginning of October to take security for the allegiance of Edmund de la Pole's adherents in the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, and Essex, and their prompt appearance in these regions probably stayed the progress of disorder. The seizure of Tyrrell appears to have been accomplished by an act of the foulest treachery. While the army of Calais was besieging Guisnes, Tyrrell was drawn from the fortress by a solemn promise of Bishop Fox, the lord privy seal, that he should have a safe conduct to and from the king's court. Security was given, and Tyrrell embarked, leaving his son behind him in command of the castle. But once on the sea he was helpless. Sir Thomas Lovell told him that he must either send a token to his son enjoining surrender or feed the fishes. The token was sent, the gates of Guisnes were opened to the king's forces, and the young Tyrrell joined his father in the Tower. The building was familiar to Sir James. It was there that he had done to death the two innocent children of Edward IV.

The diplomatic proceedings were less immediately effective. Towards the close of September Sir Charles Somerset and Dr. William Warham travelled to Antwerp to propose to Maximilian's plenipotentiaries that if the King of the Romans would undertake to expel the English rebels, the King of England would make him a present of £10,000. Maximilian sorely wanted the money, but with all his faults he was too chivalrous to betray Suffolk to the scaffold. It was represented that the earl was living in a free town of the empire, and that the emperor had no power to order his extradition. The debate was protracted, and it was not until June 19, 1502, that a treaty was signed. For a present of £10,000 towards the Turkish war, Maximilian promised that he would give no countenance to Henry's rebels, that he would expel them from his dominions, and that if they proved refractory he would punish them as criminals.

Yet this arrangement was neither so derogatory to Maximilian nor so profitable to Henry as might appear. Suffolk

was still permitted to drag on an impecunious existence at Aix-la-Chapelle, and in any circumstances, bribed or unbribed, Maximilian was too deeply involved in Italian and Turkish politics to equip a Yorkist expedition. The treaty had indeed bound him to a life-long alliance with Henry, but who could answer for that flighty hunter of the chamois? Indeed he hinted not obscurely to an envoy from Aix, that the time might come when he would again find himself at enmity with England. Meanwhile he was glad to pocket the English gold, and to know that at Aix-la-Chapelle there was a substantial pretendant to the English crown, surrounded by a little knot of exiles. For Henry the situation had ceased to present cause for immediate anxiety. The pope had issued a bull against the fugitive; the Spanish court had demanded his extradition; and it was reasonable to expect that some German prince would be willing to earn a substantial reward by a *coup-de-main*. Yet the continuance of the Tudor dynasty depended on the lives of two boys, and it was safe to predict that if anything happened to either of them, fresh hope would be infused into the adherents of Suffolk. Henry determined to leave no stone unturned until the person of the pretender was safe in his keeping.

While the festivities in honour of Prince Arthur's marriage were at their height, some Scottish envoys arrived in London with full powers to treat for the union of James IV. and the Lady Margaret. The idea of this alliance had been mooted as far back as 1495, when the princess was only five years of age, but all prospect of its realisation seemed to be broken when James espoused the cause of Warbeck. In December, 1497, however, a long truce was, as we have already seen, concluded between the two countries, and in the following autumn an event occurred which caused the marriage project to be renewed. Some Scottish gentlemen who had crossed the Tweed were roughly handled by the garrison of Norham Castle, and in response to the vehement expostulations of James, Bishop Fox was despatched to arrange the quarrel. At an interview held in Melrose abbey, the most skilful diplomatist in England suggested to James that the old marriage project should be revived. But though Henry was fully sensible of the importance of the match, he was in no hurry to conclude it. The princess was

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young and weakly, and her mother and grandmother were averse from sending her to Scotland. It would be necessary, Henry said to the Spanish ambassador in 1498, to wait at least another nine years, and the best way to secure peace was for James to marry a Spanish infanta. Nevertheless negotiations proceeded. The truce was renewed at Stirling on July 12, 1499, and in September of that year Fox was given definite power to treat of the marriage.

It is reported that when the Scottish commissioners arrived in London in the autumn of 1501, some of Henry's council objected to the marriage on the ground that it might lead to the absorption of England into Scotland. To this Henry answered with his wonted shrewdness that the greater would draw the less, and cited the example of Normandy. At last on June 24, 1502, treaties were concluded. The Princess Margaret was to King of Scotland; the two realms were to be bound al peace and mutual defence; while by a separate contracting sovereigns pledged themselves to enforce on the border. The marriage was celebrated in the urch of Holyrood on August 7, and never did Edinness a gayer or more splendid wedding. But the the thistle and the rose, celebrated in Dunbar's hydestined to be barren of happiness, for the en, proud, capricious, and pleasure-loving, as already famous for his lively and s.

e a great blow had fallen upon England. 502, Prince Arthur died suddenly in Ludlow ttle more than five months of married life. When s broken to Henry by his confessor, he sent for the saying that "he and his queen would take the painful sorrows together," and a contemporary writer has left a fresh and charming record of their mutual consolations and common grief.[1] Though it is incredible that he should have read all the Greek and Latin authors mentioned in the eulogy of his blind tutor Bernard André of Toulouse, Prince Arthur seems to have been accomplished beyond his years, and his tragical death not improbably affected the health of his mother. In the summer of 1502 Queen Elizabeth was ill at Woodstock, and on February

[1] Leland, *Collectanea*, v., 373, 374.

4, 1503, nine days after giving birth to a daughter, she passed away at the age of thirty-seven. The child was called Catharine in honour of the sister whose husband, Lord William Courtenay, was enduring a living death as a penalty for Suffolk's ambitions, and in the choice of this name we may perhaps discern a quiet token of sisterly sympathy. Vicissitudes, so extraordinary, romantic, and tragical as those through which the Woodville family had passed are not easily paralleled, and the early life of Queen Elizabeth afforded matter to the ballad-monger. Her death drew a graceful elegy from the pen of the youthful Thomas More. Beautiful, liberal, and popular she must have exerted a wholesome, though perhaps a somewhat superficial influence on her husband. "To her," says Bacon, "he was nothing uxorious, but if not indulgent he was companionable and without personal jealousy." She had borne him seven children, of whom three—Edmund, Elizabeth, and an elder Catharine—died in infancy. CHAP. IV.

The removal of the queen's influence, though perhaps in itself not decisive, combined with other causes to develop the harsher and more undignified elements in Henry's character and to debase the quality of his rule. The old statesmen were passing away and new men of inferior calibre were taking their place. Cardinal Morton died in 1500, Sir Reginald Bray, "who was noted to have had with the king the greatest freedom of any counsellor," in 1503. The disappearance of Morton removed a great figure from English political life. Though he is chiefly known to posterity as the inventor of Morton's fork—a device for extracting money which seems to have originated in the fertile mind of Fox[1]—he was a statesman after the grand manner of the Chicheles and the Beauforts, a great builder, an adroit diplomatist, a strenuous administrator. The character and appearance of the aged chancellor were depicted long afterwards by Sir Thomas More, who as a boy was placed in his household. "He was of mean stature, and though stricken in age yet bare he his body upright. In his face did shine such an amiable reverence as was pleasant to behold; gentle in communication, yet earnest and sage. He had great delight many times with rough speech to his suitors to prove, but without

[1] The sparing were to be pressed for money because they saved, the lavish because they spent (Bacon, p. 93).

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harm, what prompt wit and what bold spirit were in every man. In his speech he was fine, eloquent, and pithy. In the law he had profound knowledge, in wit he was incomparable and in memory excellent. These qualities which in him were by nature singular, he by learning and use had made perfect." The men who most influenced the king during his declining years were of baser alloy. The last parliament of the reign met in January, 1503, and chose for its speaker Edmund Dudley, a name which may have already become synonymous with extortion, and it was in the same year that Dudley's colleague Richard Empson appears to have received the honour of knighthood. "These two persons," says Bacon, "being lawyers in science and privy counsellors in authority turned law and justice into worm-wood rapine." Peace abroad and the evil practices of these two fiscal agents at home obviated any further necessity of recourse to parliament. The country was less disturbed and the throne more secure. There are neither seditions nor wars nor statutes to chronicle. But the foreign policy of the king was stained by some sordid, wild, and ludicrous proposals.

At the opening of Henry's reign there was general complaint that the commercial navy of England was declining. When the king visited Bristol, in 1486, a mummer disguised as King Brennus, the legendary founder of the city, discoursed in execrable verse upon the decay of Bristol's cloth and Bristol's shipping; and the mayor, the sheriff, and some of the best burgesses of the town ascribed their poverty to the great loss of ships and goods which the city had experienced during the past five years. Henry's policy was to encourage shipbuilding at home, and to take as much of the carrying trade as possible from the foreigner. He gave bounties for the construction of large ships, he built the first dry dock at Portsmouth, he prevented foreign vessels from taking part in the export trade of woollen goods to the Netherlands. Complaining of the decay of the navy, and the idleness of the mariners of England, parliament passed two navigation acts in the first and third years of the reign. By the second and more complete of these statutes, it was enacted that no wines from Guienne or Gascony, and no woad from Toulouse should be imported save in English, Irish, or Welsh ships, the masters and mariners of

which should be British "for the more partie"; while at the same time natives of the realm were forbidden to freight foreign ships if English ships could be had. To the Hanseatic towns, which aimed at acquiring the Gascon carrying trade, this legislation was specially obnoxious, and they regarded it as an infraction of privileges granted to them by the crown as far back as the reign of Edward III. But the promotion of the commercial navy of England was an object which certainly deserved the attention of parliament, and the complaints of the Hanseatic traders may perhaps indicate that these enactments were not devoid of success. CHAP. IV.

The navigation laws of this reign were, however, not so much the cause as the effect and the symptom of an increasing volume of commercial activity. As English traders pushed eastward into the Baltic to sell English broadcloth to the Poles and Prussians, or southward to fetch malmsey from Crete, they became increasingly sensible of the friction of foreign rivals. Twenty-two per cent. of the English cloth export, ninety-seven per cent. of the wax import, and nearly seven per cent. of the remainder of English foreign trade was carried in Hanseatic bottoms. The staplers who exported wool and hides, and the merchant adventurers who exported cloth, were loud in their complaint of the Easterlings. They had captured the trade with Norway; they had pushed the Englishman out of the Netherlands; they had prevented him from trading with Danzig; they boasted of so many ships, so many mariners, so much wealth, that they considered themselves able to carry on the whole trade of England and of other lands as well. In the picturesque quay of Bergen, the Norwegian staple-town which was so conveniently situated for Hull and Newcastle, there was the keenest rivalry between the English and German competitors for Scandinavian custom. The English merchants were often mishandled, and their houses were sometimes assaulted and burnt, so that it was a hard matter for England to maintain her footing in the Norwegian markets. A similar struggle went on in arctic waters. The trade of Iceland, the seat of the best cod-fishing in Europe, was the monopoly of the Danish king, who made some profit by the sale of licences to fishermen and merchants. These licences had been given to Hamburg, Bremen, and Danzig, and they were required from

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English traders as well. But it was impossible for Denmark to police the coast of this remote island. Scarborough, Yarmouth, Norwich, London, Boston, and Bristol, enjoyed a lucrative and contraband trade with the Icelanders, who were glad to be supplied with cloth, flour, bread, and wine, in exchange for their blubber and salt fish. But a contraband trade is always liable to violent interruption, and the privileged members of the Hanse resented the presence of the interlopers.

In the struggle for the northern and north-eastern markets English traders had one advantage over their Hanseatic rivals. They were members of a centralised state contending with the members of a loose league of cities. The whole force of Henry's government was exerted to procure possibilities of expansion for English commerce. In 1488 he protested against the maltreatment to which English traders had been subjected in Bergen, and in the following year an English embassy was sent with full powers to conclude a treaty of commerce with King John of Denmark. The treaty signed in 1490 secured to the English all the privileges which they had at any time enjoyed in the Scandinavian kingdoms: admission to the Icelandic trade; most favoured nation treatment; the right of holding real property in Bergen, in Schonen and the island of Seeland, in Finnish Lovisa, or anywhere in Denmark; the special protection of the Danish king in all criminal cases; the right of electing aldermen, and of keeping agents in Copenhagen, Malmö, and Landskrona, who were henceforward permitted to sell English cloth by retail.

At the opening of his reign Henry had been entreated not to renew the privileges of the London Hanse until redress had been given for the injuries alleged to have been inflicted on British trade. The merchants of the Hanse, on being examined before parliament and then interviewed by the king, denied the charges brought against them. Their privileges were sealed on March 9, 1486. No step could have been more unpopular with the mercantile community. It was felt that while Germans were enjoying a privileged position in England, Englishmen were excluded from German markets and maltreated in German waters. In 1488 the Easterlings were warned off Hull; in 1490 it was reported to be dangerous for a German merchant to show his face by day in the streets of London. At the suggestion of

the king a conference was held at Antwerp in the following year to adjust the points of dispute; but no terms of conciliation could be found. The Englishmen claimed damages of over £14,000 for injuries alleged to have been inflicted on their shipping; the German bill was even heavier. The Germans contended that their privileges had been violated by the navigation acts, and by acts prohibiting the importation of silken goods and the exportation of unshorn cloth. It was argued on the English side that the privileges of the Hanse restricted them to their own merchandise (*suæ merces*) and could not be made to cover wares which they imported from foreign countries to sell in England; but this novel interpretation of the charter, involving, as it certainly did involve, a fatal blow to a large part of the German carrying trade, was vigorously contested by the Easterlings. As no agreement was reached the quarrel simmered on for several years. At last, in 1498-99, a resolute effort was made to effect a settlement, but the conferences at Bruges proved to be as fruitless as those which had taken place at Antwerp. CHAP. IV.

Upon the principal point in dispute Henry was determined not to give way. "Our subjects," he wrote, "must be as free in Prussia and in all other places belonging to the Hanse towns, as the merchants of the Hanse are in England." But if England were allowed thus freely to tap the trade of Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary, would she not strike at the very roots of Hanseatic prosperity? Further, her position would be more favourable than that enjoyed by the western towns of the league, which were only permitted to trade with Prussia through Danzig. It was, in fact, part of a general policy pursued by England for breaking down German monopoly in the Baltic, a policy exemplified by a special treaty concluded between England and Riga in 1499, in accordance with which English merchants were allowed to import freely into that city, while the merchants of Riga were permitted to enjoy the benefit of the light customs levied on the Hanse in England only in respect of such articles as were produced in the town and territory of Riga itself. The Hanse, in other words, felt itself threatened all along the line. The new interpretation placed upon the phrase *suæ merces* and embodied in the treaty of Riga, would, if consistently carried out, deprive them of their preferential advantages

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in respect of a large and growing portion of their trade. Experience had shown that a royal charter did not annul an act of the English parliament; and while their privileges in England were being indirectly abridged by acts of parliament, their rivals were receiving protection in Norway and Denmark, and solicitations from the King of Poland to trade with Prussia. In the face of this onslaught the Germans stiffened their backs and refused to yield an inch, and as Henry was unprepared for war their obstinacy was well-advised. Perhaps upon the whole they may be accounted the victors, for in 1504, when Henry was desirous of depriving Suffolk of certain tempting places of refuge, a statute was passed in the English parliament enacting that no step should be taken in future to abridge the privileges of the Hanse.[1]

The trade of England with the Mediterranean was for the most part carried on in Italian or Biscayan ships. Every summer a Venetian fleet unloaded its cargo of spices and Oriental wares at Southampton or Sandwich, and returned with consignments of English wares. The wool thus obtained served as the raw material for a considerable cloth industry, which gave employment to the poor of Venice, and whenever the supply fell short, licences were issued by the signory to individual traders in the hopes of repairing the deficiency. The commercial system of Venice reposed upon the principle that Venetian vessels were to fetch wool from the north, in exchange for their outward cargoes of Oriental spice and Levantine wine. At the beginning of Henry's reign this system appeared to be threatened. In 1488 the signory became aware that English and other foreign vessels were buying Cretan wine direct from the grower. To protect the carrying trade of the Lagoons, a duty was imposed of four ducats per butt on all Cretan wines loaded in foreign ships. Henry retaliated. The greatest commercial rivals of Venice in Italy were the Florentines, and the Florentine port was Pisa. On April 15, 1490, a treaty was concluded with Florence in London arranging for free commercial intercourse for a period of six years. An English wool staple was to be established at Pisa, and the

[1] Schanz, *Englische Handelspolitik gegen Ende des Mittelalters*, i., 14-37; D. Schäfer, *Kritik von Schanz* in *Jahrbucher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, vol. xli., N.F., vii., 88-126.

Venetian export of wool was to be restricted to 600 sacks for every voyage. But while Venice was thus placed upon a strict diet, Pisa was supplied with sufficient wool for the needs not only of Florence but of all Italy, with the exception of the republic of St. Mark. CHAP. IV.

At the news of this startling arrangement the Venetian signory not unnaturally took alarm, and an envoy was sent to remonstrate with Henry, and to represent that if Venice was stinted of her wool, England might have to go without her malmsey and her ginger. It was an obvious retort that the English ships which carried the wool to Pisa would be capable of bringing back the spices and wines, the supply of which had hitherto been a Venetian monopoly. It was therefore necessary for Venice to make a vigorous effort to prevent Pisa from becoming an *entrepôt* for eastern wares. A bounty was given to Venetian vessels shipping Cretan wines to the west, and Venetians were prohibited from carrying the wine to Pisa. Retaliation breeds retaliation. The parliament of 1492 imposed an additional import duty of eighteen shillings on the butt, and so regulated the retail price that it would be impossible for the Venetian importer to obtain a market. The English staple remained at Pisa; the Flanders galleys were impressed into the king's service for the French war. It was obvious that Venice stood to lose by the struggle. Even after England had become her political ally the wine duty was maintained, though Henry was frequently willing to accept the payment of a lower rate.

As the government attempted to win foreign markets for English goods by means of commercial treaties or retaliatory duties, so it interfered with the internal economy of industry and trade. Sometimes its action was directly prompted by the care for national defence; sometimes it was prompted by the desire to stay the encroachment of craft upon craft; sometimes to check an abuse of authority on the part of a municipality or trade; sometimes to avoid disputes between labourer and employer, and to secure for the nation a constant supply of disciplined and tractable workmen; sometimes to protect a native industry from foreign competition, to arrest the efflux of the precious metals, or to retain within the limits of the country the finishing processes applied to its own raw material. How-

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ever unwise may have been the methods of Henry's parliament —and some of them were clearly futile—the motives upon which they were founded were patriotic and disciplinary, and the legislation of the reign commanded the enthusiastic approval of Francis Bacon the great statesman who wrote its history, and whose mind was stored with all that was best and ripest in the political wisdom of the Tudor age.

In the absence of official statistics, it was impossible to form an accurate estimate of the population, nor was there any clear apprehension of the various causes which affect the multiplication of the race. But one symptom was sufficiently obvious to the nobility and gentry who attended these parliaments, and that was the depopulation of the country districts owing to the conversion of arable land into pasture. An act passed in 1488, "for the keeping up houses for husbandage," depicts in somewhat lurid colours the evils which appeared to result from this inevitable economic change. It is a change "whereby idleness, ground and beginning of all mischiefs, daily do increase, for where in some towns two hundred persons were occupied and lived by their lawful labours, now be there occupied two or three herdsmen, and the residue fall in idleness, the husbandry, which is one of the greatest commodities of this realm, is greatly decayed, churches destroyed, the service of God withdrawn, the bodies then buried not prayed for, the patrons and curates wronged, the defence of the land against our enemies outward feebled and impaired".[1]

The object of a preamble is not to state facts in a scientific way but to make out a case for legislation, and the rapid decline in the population of some country districts seemed to require an urgent remedy. The country folk constituted the fighting force of the kingdom, and there was a widespread belief encouraged by the spectacle of Italy, where the city populations were compelled to resort to mercenary defence, that military virtues and attainments could only be fostered in the country side. It was only too probable that the greater part of the discharged ploughmen joined the ranks of the vagabonds and sturdy beggars, and if others drifted into the towns to search for employment they might easily be the cause of factiousness or disorder. To meet these evils it was provided

[1] 4 H. VII. c. 19.

in 1488 that owners of houses let to farm with twenty acres of land should be bound to keep up such houses and buildings "as were convenient and necessary for maintaining and upholding of tillage and husbandry," upon pain of forfeiting half the profits to the king or the lord of the fee; and in view of the special importance of keeping up the population of the Isle of Wight to defend the country against the French, an act was passed in the same parliament to the effect that no one should be allowed to take more than one farm exceeding ten marks rental. The aim of this legislation was no doubt, as Bacon describes it, "to amortize a great part of the lands of the kingdom unto the hold and occupation of the yeomanry or middle people," and by encouraging yeomen farmers to foster the infantry of the kingdom. But it was none the less an attempt to run counter to a natural current of economic motive; and like all such attempts it was doomed to fail. It is impossible to keep people on the land by act of parliament.

That the flow of the precious metals from the country should be controlled, if not prohibited, by the state was a cardinal axiom of medieval policy. An act passed in 1478 had prohibited alien merchants from carrying money out of the kingdom without the king's permission, and had compelled them to expend the profits of their sales upon the commodities of the realm. This act, originally passed for seven years, was revived in 1487 and made perpetual, and its restrictions were extended to merchants from Ireland and Guernsey. In the next parliament it was made penal for a foreigner to take more than ten crowns in cash from the country. The Irishman was even more heavily penalised. An act passed in 1503 made it an offence to export more than 6s. 8d. worth of bullion, plate, or coin to Ireland, and as the influx of light Irish silver was debasing the home currency, strict measures were taken to prevent it. No merchant was to carry a sum exceeding 3s. 4d. from Ireland to England. The protection of native industries was a familiar idea before Henry came to the throne; but during his reign the principle was hardened into a coherent system. A heavy export duty upon raw wools was designed to keep the cloth manufacture in the country; while a light export duty on cloth permitted the English clothiers to command the foreign as well as the domestic market. An act of

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1487 laid down that the carding and shearing of cloth must take place in England, and a statute passed in the next parliament gave to the weavers and clothiers valuable rights of pre-emption in the home wool market. At the same time the earlier legislation against the importation of certain kinds of silken goods was continued.

Careful as parliament was to protect the interests of some leading industries it did not neglect the claims of the consumer. Complaint being made in 1488 that the drapers and tailors were selling cloth at excessive prices and "havynge unresonable lucre," a statute was framed to settle the price at which cloth should be sold. "Fustians," it was said, in 1495, "which used to wear two years or more will not now endure whole by the space of four months scarcely, to the great hurt of the poor commons and serving men of this realm." An act was accordingly passed against "unlawful and deceitful making of fustians". When the mayor, aldermen, and citizens of London made an ordinance that no Londoner should frequent any fair or market outside the capital, parliament stepped in to defend the country towns against so insidious an attempt at monopoly. In one case the desire to protect the consumer against exorbitant charges was associated with motives of national defence. The price of the long bow was lowered by one statute, and the use of the crossbow limited by another. Paternal legislation of this type must often have been a real impediment to economic progress, but in an age of guilds and fortified vested interests, some paternal legislation was a necessary guarantee against the abuses of monopoly. The attempt of the company of merchant adventurers to drive all independent English traders from "the four universal marts" of Flanders by the imposition of prohibitive fines, was happily foiled by the parliament of 1497. A statute passed seven years later imposed an important limitation upon the autonomy of the guilds in the interests of the general public. It enacted that "no craft, mystery, fraternity, or guild" should make statutes or ordinances "in disinheritance or diminution of the prerogative of the king, nor of other, nor against the common profit of the people," unless the same be approved by the chancellor, the treasurer, the chief justice of either bench, or any three of them, or before both the justices of assize in their circuit. The meaning of the statute

was that the central government claimed and intended to assert complete industrial control.[1]

Posterity is apt to judge the quality of statesmanship by the share which it may possess of the prophetic or divining element. To Bacon the legislative work of Henry's reign was impressive, because it seemed to him to be framed for the benefit of unborn generations. It "bowed the ancient policy of this realm from considerations of plenty to considerations of power". Yet we must not exaggerate the originality or prescience of these early Tudor parliaments. They, like all other parliaments, lived on an inherited tradition and attempted to adjust it to the world around them. They legislated against usury; they tried to fix wages; they fulminated against such as stuffed beds with "improper feathers"; they settled the hours at which labourers were to rise, and the time which they were permitted to spend over their breakfasts and their dinners. Nothing is too small for them, and rarely do they generalise. An air of old-world morality pervades their transactions, sometimes even a little timid as if in the presence of forces imperfectly understood. Yet the forces are there, and we can feel their propulsion in the statute book: the great sheep-farmers, the wealthy and bustling clothiers, and the hardy and adventurous mariners of the seaport towns.

If, indeed, we measure actions solely by the future which is in them, then there is one action in this reign which overshadows all others—the discovery of the North American coast by John Cabot under letters patent given to him by Henry VII. in 1496. Of Cabot's earlier history we know nothing, save that he was born in Genoa about 1451, that he was naturalised a Venetian citizen in 1476, that he is said to have visited Mecca and to have applied in person to the courts of Portugal and Spain in the hopes of obtaining royal aid towards the prosecution of transatlantic discovery. In 1490 he appears to have left Venice with all his family and to have settled in Bristol. In this active and enterprising port, from which ten years earlier an expedition had sailed into the Atlantic to search for the island of Brazil and the Seven Cities of popular fable, the great Italian mariner soon became a

[1] 19 H. VII. c. 7; Leadam, *Select Cases in the Star Chamber*, Introduction, cii.

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moving force. Warmed by the flame of his imagination, the men of Bristol resumed the paths of maritime adventure, and for the next seven years two, three, or four caravels, equipped by Bristol men, regularly went out to seek the mythical island and the Seven Cities. At last Cabot himself put out to sea with his three sons, Lewis, Sebastian, and Sancho. The royal letters patent issued on March 5, 1496, in response to a petition presented in the names of the four Genoese, gave to them, their heirs and deputies, "full and free authority to sail to all parts, countries, and seas of the East, of the West, and of the North under our banners and ensigns with five ships; upon their own proper costs and charges to seek out" any "regions or provinces of the heathens and infidels which before that time have been unknown to all Christians". They were given power to set up the royal banner "in any village, town, castle, island, or mainland by them newly found," and to hold their discoveries as the vassals and lieutenants of the king. A fifth part of the net profits of every voyage was to be paid into the royal exchequer. No custom, however, was to be levied upon any of the merchandise brought from the lands newly found. Nor were the Cabots to be liable to disturbance in the enjoyment of the fruits of their enterprise. No English subject might, upon pain of forfeiture of his ships and goods, visit, "without the licence of the said John, and his sons, and their deputies," any of the territories which they might chance to find.

In the first week of August, 1497, when the country was still quivering after the Cornish revolt, John Cabot was back again in England. With one small ship manned by eighteen men, nearly all of whom were natives of Bristol, he had crossed the Atlantic and found land on the other side. It is impossible to fix with exactitude the spot at which the first English vessel touched the American continent. It may have been as far north as the coast of Labrador; it may have been as far south as Cape Breton Island; a persistent tradition assigns to Cabot the discovery of Newfoundland. The information brought back by the travellers was such as to inflame still further the spirit of adventure. Four hundred or, according to another story, 700 leagues from England, there was a country distinguished for the languor of its tides and the temperateness of its climate. Along this mysterious shore Cabot had coasted

for many, a report said for 300, leagues. Though he had seen no human beings, it was clear that the land was inhabited, for the voyagers had come upon felled trees, and had brought back to England a needle for making nets, and some snares which had been set to catch game. The sea, it was said, was crowded with fish, so crowded that you could bring them up by weighting a basket with a stone and dipping it into the water. England, then, would no longer require to struggle for her fish supplies with Danish and German competitors off the inhospitable shores of Iceland. But the fish would prove to be but a small element in the value of the discovery. The voyagers had touched the land of the Great Khan, of the Seven Cities, rich doubtless in Brazil wood and in silks, and leading to mysterious treasures in the distant east. "Master John," wrote the envoy of Milan, who interviewed the discoverer soon after his return, "has set his mind on something greater; for he expects to go further on towards the East, constantly hugging the shore until he shall be over against an island by him called Cipango, situated in the equinoctial region, where he thinks all the spices and also all the precious stones originate." In proportion to bulk, there was then no cargo more valuable than spices. The king rewarded the discoverer of "the new isle" with a gift of £10, and bestowed upon him a pension of £20 a year to be held during the pleasure of the crown. CHAP. IV.

It was rumoured in London that his highness had promised that Cabot should have ten, fifteen, or twenty ships in the following spring armed to his order, and that he had given him all the convicts, save such as were imprisoned for high treason, to man the fleet. "With this help," wrote Soncino, on December 18, "they will go to that country to make a colony, by means of which they hope to establish in London a greater storehouse of spices than there is in Alexandria; and the chief men of the enterprise are of Bristol, great sailors, who now that they know where to go, say that it is not a voyage of more than fifteen days, nor do they ever have storms after they get away from Ireland." The Venetian Pasqualigo, writing on August 23, a few days after Cabot's return, describes the enthusiasm of Bristol at the triumphant success of her adopted son. "He is styled the Great Admiral. Vast honour is paid to him; he dresses in silk and the English run after him like mad people.

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So he can enlist as many of them as he pleases and a number of our own rogues besides." [1]

It was well to strike while the iron was hot, and on February 3, 1498, new letters patent were granted to John Cabot, authorising him to take at his pleasure six English ships, paying for them at the rate at which the king would pay for them if they were impressed in the royal service, provided that they were of 200 tons burden or under. These he was to "convey or lead to the land and isle of late found by the said John in our name and by our commandment". From the terms of the grant we may conjecture either that Henry was unwilling to spare ships of a burden heavier than 200 tons for so distant and perilous a voyage, or that he declined to coerce the owners of such heavier ships to let them out to Cabot at the royal rate. The expedition started in May. The fleet consisted of five vessels provisioned for a year, one of them furnished by the king, the remaining four by the merchants of Bristol. Several of the London and Bristol merchants ventured small stocks, as coarse cloth, caps, laces, and the king advanced sums of money varying from £30 to 40s. to various merchants "going to the new isle". Of the voyage itself we can only descry the vaguest outlines. It would seem that Cabot, attempting to discover a north-western passage to Asia, struck the eastern coast of Greenland a little north of Cape Farewell, and then followed the desolate shore northwards till on June 11 he reached latitude 67° 30'. At this point the crew, paralysed by cold and the increasing difficulties of navigation, refused to proceed, and the vessels retraced their course to the southernmost point of Greenland. Again they headed for the north, this time along the western shore of Greenland, and again were repulsed by ice and snow. It was then determined to revisit the scene, none too clement, of the earlier expedition. The coast of Labrador was sighted; and after skirting the shores of Newfoundland the voyagers faced southward, till, somewhere between the Delaware and Chesapeake bays, finding that the season was drawing on and that it was impossible to replenish their stores, they resolved to put back across the ocean.

The Spanish court was fully informed of these far-reaching

[1] *Calendar State Papers, Venice*, i., 752.

undertakings, and Henry, aware of the jealous scrutiny of his confederates, did all that in him lay to disarm suspicion. He took Don Pedro de Ayala into his confidence, showed him charts, intimated that their highnesses of Spain would take "great interest" in this innocuous voyage of discovery.[1] He was right in thinking that Spain would not be indifferent. The Spanish ambassador had a deep-rooted suspicion that the islands marked upon Cabot's map were in reality, what they scrupulously professed not to be, the islands of the Caribbean which were first discovered by Columbus; and when Alonzo de Hojeda was starting for the Caribbean Sea in June, 1501, an order was conveyed to him to check the intrusions of the English.

But the time was not ripe for a serious attack upon the Spanish monopoly in the western hemisphere. The death of John Cabot, the growing avarice of the king, the troubles which confronted the government, the need for studying Spanish susceptibilities, and, above all, the meagre commercial results of the first two expeditions combined to give a check to English oceanic enterprise. The English mariners, who steered for the land of codfish, had to encounter bleak and icy winds, and after all their hardships descended upon a bleak and inhospitable shore. The gold, the Brazil wood, the nutmeg, and the cloves were as mythical as the dim Icelandic tradition of the vines and the persistent delusion of the Seven Cities. For the next two decades the Portuguese were more sedulous in their attendance upon the mud-banks of Newfoundland than the mariners of Bristol. But though England had neither the capital nor the maritime organisation which enabled Spain to take the lead in colonial enterprise, it was something that the English claim to a large tract in North America should have obtained admission upon Spanish maps. That the claim was vague, that it was even exaggerated by the vanity of Sebastian Cabot, the discoverer's son, who appropriated the renown and obliterated the fame of his father, proved to be no disadvantage. This was the tiny seed from which the tree of Anglo-Saxon colonisation was destined to spring.[2]

[1] *Calendar State Papers, Spain*, i., 210.

[2] H. P. Biggar, "The Voyages of the Cabots and of the Corte-Reals," *Revue Hispanique*, tom. x., 1903.

CHAPTER V.

CHURCH AND STATE.

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THE death of Prince Arthur on April 2, 1502, left a boy of eleven heir-apparent to the throne. The third child and second son of Henry and Elizabeth was born at Greenwich on June 29, 1491, and was baptised by Richard Fox, then Bishop of Exeter, with his father's name. About 100 years later his biographer, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, recorded that while Arthur was alive, Henry was destined for the See of Canterbury, but if this prospect was ever entertained—and it may well have been a mere inference from the boy's theological education—it was soon discarded. Temporal honours and offices rained down in rapid succession upon his infant head. Before the child was ten months old he was appointed Warden of the Cinque Ports and Constable of Dover. At two years he was Earl Marshal. His fifth birthday found him already Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Duke of York, Warden of the Scottish Marches, Knight of the Bath and of the Garter. Nor was this accumulation of distinctions a mere concession to idle parade. It was a means of bringing important posts under the direct supervision of the king; it removed opportunities of peculation and power from the feudal nobility; it facilitated economical administration, since the work could be done cheaply by deputies of comparatively humble rank. The selection of the title Duke of York was not only a concession to Yorkist prejudice, but served to remind the king's subjects that Duke Richard was really dead, and that Perkin Warbeck was an impostor. That the lord-lieutenancy of Ireland should be entrusted to the king's second son was an additional proof that the sister isle was to be wrenched from its allegiance to the White Rose.

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For a season death had been very busy in the royal household. The king lost his third daughter Elizabeth in 1495, his third son Edmund in 1500, his eldest son Arthur in 1502, his queen and youngest daughter in 1503. It was enough to create a feeling of anxiety and nervousness as to the future. Sickness was abroad in the land, and one boy's life stood between England and the renewal of civil faction. The hopes of the whole country were centred in the Prince of Wales (as he was created on February 18, 1503), and the marriage of the prince and the re-marriage of the king henceforward became objects of prime political importance.

Even before Prince Arthur's death the child had been proposed as a husband for one of the daughters of the Archduke Philip, but circumstances were now changed, and another plan was brought forward. The alliance of England was still precious to the sovereigns of Spain, whose Neapolitan schemes were being resisted by the power of France; and no sooner did the news of Arthur's death reach the Spanish court than the Duke of Estrada was commissioned to negotiate a marriage between the widowed Catharine and her young brother-in-law. It was true that the papal dispensation was required since prince and princess were related to one another in the first degree of affinity, but no serious obstacle was expected from the curia. The real difficulties, now as always, were pecuniary. Ferdinand demanded that Henry should repay him the first instalment of the marriage portion which had been sent to England on the occasion of Catharine's marriage, and that the Spanish princess should be put in possession of the revenue of her dowry lands in England. Henry not only declined to refund the 100,000 crowns which he had received, but claimed that he was entitled to the unpaid residue of the marriage portion. Nor would he consent that Catharine should return to Spain.

These asperities notwithstanding, Henry and his council were fully sensible of the value of the Spanish alliance. Indeed upon the death of the Queen of England there was talk at the English court of a match between the widowed king and his widowed daughter-in-law. Isabella was horrified at so monstrous a proposal. "It would be an evil thing," she wrote to the Duke of Estrada, "the mere mention of which offends the ears;

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we would not for anything in the world that it should take place. If the King of England wished for a wife the young Queen of Naples was particularly well qualified to console him in his deep affliction."[1] The lady was the daughter of a sister of Ferdinand, twenty-six years of age, amiable and well-endowed. Meanwhile the Spanish sovereigns relaxed their demands, and the marriage compact between Catharine and the younger Henry was struck upon June 23. It was no convenient season for haggling. The King of France had attacked Roussillon, and taken Salsas; English military aid was urgently required. Besides, Catharine was in Henry's hands, and since it was clear that she was not to be allowed to return to Spain, it was better that she should be married and endowed than widowed, contemned, and destitute. All was suddenly compliance. Spain would intercede with Maximilian for the surrender of Suffolk; would be liberal to English commerce; would relinquish the dowry claim; would enter, if possible, into a closer treaty of alliance. The victory lay with Henry. The right of succession to the crown of Spain was reserved to the princess, and the 100,000 crowns did not recross the sea. The wedding was to take place as soon as Prince Henry had completed his fourteenth year, provided that the marriage portion was in London ready for delivery. Two days later, on June 25, 1503, Henry and Catharine were solemnly betrothed in the Bishop of Salisbury's house in Fleet Street.

After many delays and some anxieties, the papal dispensation was granted by Julius II. on December 26, 1503. Queen Isabella just lived to read it. But the completion of the match, though sanctioned by the Church and guaranteed by a treaty, was no foregone conclusion. That was an age when treaties were torn up with every new shifting in the political kaleidoscope, and the whole situation of European affairs was altered by Isabella's death in November, 1504. In accordance with the will of the queen the throne of Castile devolved upon her daughter Joanna, who was to govern in conjunction with the Archduke Philip, her fair and pleasure-loving half-Flemish consort. Joanna was a true daughter of Spain, passionate, devout, jealous, but of unsound mind. It was impossible that

[1] *Calendar State Papers, Spain*, i., 360.

such a woman should rule Castile, and yet Philip could have no claim to govern the Castilians save in his wife's right. A duel began between Ferdinand the Aragonese and Philip the Fleming for the kingdom of Castile. By the will of Isabella Ferdinand had been appointed to govern in the absence of the queen, but the grandees whose power he had broken were against him and looked rather to distant Brussels for a ruler who might be more compliant and less powerful. At Brussels Philip took the title of King of Castile and prepared to enter upon his inheritance. Louis promised him 1,000 lances; Maximilian was of the alliance; Philip's son Charles was pledged to Claude of France. What if some disaster should overtake Ferdinand? It was well that the Prince of Wales should not marry into a falling house. It was well that he should be left free to accept more shining offers. Accordingly on June 27, 1505, on the eve of his fifteenth birthday, Henry Prince of Wales declared before Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester, that he had been contracted during his minority to Catharine Princess of Wales, and that being now near the age of puberty he would not ratify the said marriage contract, but on the contrary denounced it as null and void. CHAP. V.

The act was secret. For the moment Henry's mind was oscillating between Philip and Ferdinand, but the political horizon was still clouded and uncertain, and there was a sense of impending change in all the chancelleries of Europe. Aragon was drifting towards France; France was drifting away from Austria and Burgundy, and the needle of English policy was slowly veering towards Brussels. But there was much still to obscure these underlying tendencies. In 1504 the old commercial quarrel between England and Flanders had broken into fresh flame. English merchandise had been subjected to new duties in the Flemish markets, and as Flanders declined to listen to representations, commercial intercourse was forbidden, and the English trade was removed from Antwerp to Calais. "Without the English," wrote Quirini, the Venetian ambassador at Brussels, "the fairs of Antwerp do not yield one-third of the usual profit."[1] But when Philip sent to treat, Henry replied that the affair concerned his subjects and that he would

[1] *Calendar State Papers, Venice*, i., 846.

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not interfere. So transparent a pretext could deceive nobody. It was clear that for the moment it did not suit Henry to compose the strife, and that for the sufficient reason that a few years of lean Antwerp fairs would be sure to bring the Flemings to a submissive mood.

Nor was this the only circumstance which entered into his calculations. About the middle of April, 1504, the Duke of Suffolk had slipped out of Aix, against the wish and without the knowledge of Maximilian, in the hope of obtaining assistance from Duke George of Saxony, the Lord of Friesland, a prince whose professed friendship was in all likelihood nothing but the mask of pecuniary speculation. "The White Rose," as the unlucky exile was called, trusted in vain to the safe conduct and plighted faith of Duke Charles of Guelders. As he voyaged through the duchy upon his way to Friesland, he was seized and thrown into close confinement. In the autumn war broke out between Guelders and Philip, and, though the quarrel was ancient and founded on the old antagonism between the house of Egmond and the Burgundian dynasty, between the spirit of local liberty and the methods of foreign centralisation, it was now further complicated by a contest for the person of Suffolk. At Brussels it was vehemently suspected that Guelders was supported by English gold; but even if the duke's safe conduct had been violated at Henry's request, there is no evidence of money passing. On the contrary, all through 1505, Henry, despite negotiations for the hand of Margaret of Angoulême, was cautiously gravitating to the side of the archduke. There were tempting prospects in that quarter—the hand of Margaret of Savoy, Maximilian's wise young daughter, for the king himself; the hand of Charles, Philip's only son, heir to Austria, Burgundy, and Castile, for Henry's second daughter Mary; a settlement of the commercial trouble; and, lastly, the surrender of Suffolk. So far did Henry advance along the path of friendship as to lend large sums to the archduke for his next voyage into Spain.[1]

Meanwhile inquiries were being prosecuted into the charms and resources of the Queen of Naples, and the position and intentions of her uncle Ferdinand. In June "three confident persons" were sent to Valencia, where the prospective bride

[1] For the negotiations with France, see Gairdner, *Letters and Papers, Rich. III. and Hen. VII.*, ii., 133 ff.

was living with her mother. Their instructions touching the lady were, as Bacon says, "so curious and exquisite as if the King had been young, a man would have judged him to be amorous". The ambassadors were required to report not only upon the intellectual and especially the linguistic attainments of the queen, but upon her diet and every particular of her person. They were to mark her visage whether painted or not, fat or lean, sharp or round; cheerful, frowning, or melancholy; steadfast, light, or blushing; to report upon the clearness of her skin, the colour of her hair, her eyebrows, teeth and lips, her nose, forehead, arms, and hands, her fingers and neck, and to inquire whether she had any sickness, blemish, or deformity.[1] The answer was on the whole unpromising. The queen was charming, "not painted, of good compass, amiable, round and fat," but she and her mother were decidedly averse from the match, and refused to allow a portrait to be painted. The jointure was insufficient, for the Grand Captain had confiscated their property in Naples, and the two ladies were living upon a scanty allowance granted them by the King of Aragon. Besides, a cloud rested alike on the prospects and intentions of Ferdinand. The people greatly desired the coming of Philip and an alleviation in the burden of taxation, and as Ferdinand had declared his intention of administering Castile during his lifetime, there were all the elements of civil strife. Further, the ambassadors had heard at Blois that Ferdinand was about to marry Madame de Foix, the niece of Louis XII.

Though strict silence was observed in Spain, nothing could be more natural than a combination between France and Aragon against the vaulting ambition of Maximilian and Philip. On October 12 rumour was turned into fact. Ferdinand married Germaine of Foix, and Louis renounced his claims to Naples and promised to help him against Philip. In the following May the last link in the Franco-Burgundian alliance was definitely broken by the betrothal of Claude of France to Francis of Angoulême. If the daughter of Louis had married Charles V., as had been stipulated in four consecutive treaties, what might not have been the future of Europe? Maximilian

[1] *Calendar State Papers, Spain*, i., 436; Gairdner, *Memorials of Henry VII.*, p. 223 ff.

CHAP. V. at least had conceived the possibilities on so liberal a scale as to propose the abolition of the Salic law, so that his grandson might ascend the French throne and unite Western Europe under his sceptre. That dream was now shattered. France had ranged herself against the empire on the side of Ferdinand, "the King of Spain" as she called him. Her game was to pit Guelders against Philip, the Swiss against Maximilian, to offer matrimonial baits to Henry, and to preserve Castile and the English alliance for the husband of Germaine de Foix.

An accident of weather gave Henry the new system of alliances to which his mind had been cautiously travelling through much perplexity and indecision. On January 16, 1506, Philip and Joanna, bound for Castile, and fresh from a military and diplomatic victory in Guelders, were driven by a violent gale upon the coast of Dorset. The King of Castile sent to Henry to apprise him of his arrival and to express a wish that he might visit the English court. It was a step of doubtful wisdom, and there were Spanish counsellors to advise that it would be a safer course to put out once more and brave the Channel weather. The tidings at once threw Henry into his happiest humour. Instructions were sent to the gentlemen living near the coast to attend upon the visitors, and palfreys and litters were despatched to bring them on their way. Meanwhile festal preparations went forward with all speed at Windsor. It is a mistake to picture Henry as devoid of the liberal or magnificent spirit. Economical as he always was, miserly as he undoubtedly became, he would lavish money upon great occasions and at the call of policy and pride. The festivities in honour of his eldest son's marriage were certainly marred by no touch of parsimony, and royal honour now enjoined that the King of Castile should have a taste of English hospitality and splendour. But in all the profusion of the Windsor meeting, the gold cloth, the largesse, the feasting sustained from January 31 till March 2, there was the underlying note of political design. On February 9 Philip was installed as Knight of the Garter, and the Prince of Wales received the order of the Golden Fleece, and on the same day after mass a treaty was signed. All existing alliances notwithstanding, Philip and Henry bound themselves in a strict offensive and defensive union. Each party was to be "a friend of the friends and an enemy of the

enemies of the other contracting party". Exiles, rebels, and fugitives harboured in the territory of either of the contracting sovereigns were to be arrested and given over upon a demand preferred by the other. Upon Philip's side the treaty was signed not only in his own name but in that of his father, and Maximilian's ratification was promised in four months. At a banquet after the conclusion of the treaty, Henry spoke some felicitous words: "You have seen," he said, "the round table at Winchester of which so much has been said and written; but I hope that in future men will talk of this table at which a true perpetual friendship was made between the Empire of Rome, the Kingdom of Castile, Flanders, and Brabant, and the Kingdom of England".[1] CHAP. V.

The fate of Suffolk was sealed. Before his departure from England, Philip undertook that the duke should be delivered, and Henry quieted the honourable scruples of his guest by a solemn promise in writing, sealed with his own hand, that Suffolk should receive a full pardon for his offences. On March 24 the exile was brought over from Calais and lodged in the Tower of London. But though the person of Suffolk was secured, there was still a representative of the White Rose loose upon the continent. Richard de la Pole had remained in Aix during the period of his brother's detention in Guelders and at Namur. But with an Anglo-Imperial alliance on foot, Aix was no longer a safe place for a Yorkist pretender, and, besides, Richard began to find the creditors of his brother in the city increasingly clamorous. Escaping first into Hungary and then into France, he led a career of singular hopes, adventures, and vicissitudes. How he was pensioned by Louis XII. and recognised as King of England, how he commanded German troops in Navarre, and became the bosom friend of the Chevalier Bayard; how on two occasions he nearly invaded England at the head of a French force; how he started horse-racing at Metz, went on a diplomatic mission to Prague and was ultimately slain fighting at the side of the French king at Pavia, this story belongs to the romance of English adventure. The fate of the elder brother was less eventful and more tragic. Kept a close prisoner during the remainder of Henry VII.'s reign, Suffolk was condemned in 1513 to expiate upon the scaffold the crime

[1] Gachard, *Collection des Voyages des Souverains des Pays Bas*, i., 424-25.

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of his own illustrious descent, the ambitions of his brother, and the hostility of France.

The treaty of Windsor was flanked both by a matrimonial and by a commercial settlement. Though it was notorious that the Archduchess Margaret was a woman with a will, Philip airily disposed of his sister's hand to the King of England. The marriage portion was fixed at 300,000 crowns, each crown to be worth four shillings sterling, while in addition Philip bound himself to pay 30,850 crowns a year in respect of Margaret's jointures, for the lady had already been twice married, in Spain and Savoy. The King of England was to settle an annual revenue of 20,000 gold nobles upon his bride, and the children of the marriage, if children came, were to succeed to all inheritances in Spain, Flanders, and elsewhere to which their mother might be entitled. Signed on March 20, and ratified on May 15, the matrimonial treaty appeared to be a prosperous and promising transaction for England.

In the matter of commerce Henry used his fortuitous advantages to the straining point, though the treaty was not actually concluded till April 30, a week after Philip and his retinue had set sail from Falmouth. English traders were to be exempt from certain local tolls in Zealand, Brabant, and Antwerp; English woollens were to be sold wholesale throughout the territories of the archduke, and (Flanders excepted) by retail as well. The Netherlanders were to pay the dues fixed by the treaty of 1496, and to be protected against fraudulent dealing in the Calais mart. Loud was the outcry among the wool manufacturers of the Netherlands at this sudden prospect of English competition. The malice of a side-wind had cast down the protective barrier which guarded their home markets. The treaty was christened the *Malus Intercursus* and pressure was put upon Philip to denounce it.

Philip's days were numbered. In September after a brief summer's taste of his new kingdom, he was struck down at Burgos by the hand of death, yet not before the difficulties naturally involved in the union of Burgundy and Spain had disclosed themselves. Guelders was again upon the war-path, and French men-at-arms were in the service of the duke. The tragedy of Burgos was instantly suggestive of new matrimonial possibilities. Henry's promised bride, Margaret of

Savoy, had hitherto resisted all attempts to induce her to face the trials of a third husband. But Philip's widow Joanna might be more pliable, and to the politicians of Henry's council there was much to recommend the match. Joanna was Queen of Castile in her own right, and the revenues of that country would flow into her husband's coffers; she was already the mother of children, and another male child would be an additional source of security to the Tudor dynasty. On the other hand there was an obstacle of a personal nature. Joanna was mad. Whatever doubts might have attached to her sanity during the lifetime of her husband were effectually dispelled by her conduct after his death. She travelled about by night with the corpse; refused to permit its burial, and was given over to the empire of the most afflicting and disordered fancies. Nevertheless it was a serious plan at the English court that this poor creature should become the wife of Henry. "There is no king in the world," wrote De Puebla to Ferdinand, on April 15, 1507, "who would make so good a husband to the Queen of Castile as the King of England whether she be sane or insane. She would soon recover her reason if wedded to the King of England"; and again, "the English seem little to mind her insanity, especially as they have been told that it would not prevent her bearing children".[1] CHAP. V.

In this scandalous negotiation there was one peculiar piece of effrontery. Catharine was compelled to write to Ferdinand to urge the conclusion of a marriage between her insane sister and her elderly father-in-law. Her own position at this time was one of singular humiliation and anxiety. Formally betrothed to the Prince of Wales, she was kept in such destitution that she was obliged to sell her gold and silver plate, and to see her officers and servants walking about in rags. "They have lived," she writes, "ever since they have been in England in privation and misery." Her letters to Spain boil over with indignation and wounded pride. For four months she had been prevented from seeing the Prince of Wales, though they lived under the same roof, and when her expostulations were brought to the notice of the king, he replied that it was all done out of consideration for her, to induce Ferdinand to pay her marriage portion. She told her father that she had been treated

[1] *Calendar State Papers, Spain*, i., 511.

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worse in England than any other woman. The King of England, she wrote on April 15, 1507, told her positively that he no longer regarded himself and the Prince of Wales to be bound by the marriage treaty, because the marriage portion had not been paid. No comfort could be obtained from her confessor. Asked whether the treaty could be broken, he replied that it could, if it were concluded conditionally, and the conditions were not fulfilled. In these circumstances Catharine made up her mind to fend for herself. Fate had plunged her into a world of cynical politicians, and steeled by bitter experience, she set herself to outwit them at their own cynical game. She baited Henry with Joanna, praised him to De Puebla, said that she was well treated and well content, while at the same time she informed Ferdinand that though Henry's words and professions had changed for the better, his acts remained unaltered. To Joanna she wrote of the wisdom and virtue of the king, and how marriage with him would make her sister "the most noble and the most powerful queen in the world". As an extra attraction it was propounded that an English expedition to Africa would be a sequel of the match.[1]

A crusade was in the air. In 1505 the King of Portugal had sent his confessor to Henry begging him to undertake the conquest of Africa, and offering him an army of 25,000 men to fight under the English colours. Idealism in international politics still assumed the shape of a common Christian enterprise against the Moslem, and monarchs as they felt the approach of death or the appeals of religion recurred to the thought of their undischarged duties of destruction. Henry was pleased with the Portuguese proposals, and sent to open the matter to the King of France. If Louis would join in the enterprise, England would go forward. The scheme faded away, and perhaps was never seriously intended. Politicians are often polite to ideals which they recognise to be impracticable, and allow them to cool imperceptibly in the hard climate of experience. Two years later, however, Henry was seized with a quinzy so severe that at one time his life was despaired of. On his recovery he wrote to Pope Julius II., that never was there so fine an occasion for a crusade; he had

[1] *Calendar State Papers, Spain*, i., 513, 514, 553.

concluded treaties of friendship with almost all the Catholic kings and princes; the effusion of Christian blood was distasteful to him; he had never desired conquests; he wished to avenge the injuries committed by the Turks upon the Christians, and to reconquer the holy sepulchre. Shortly afterwards De Puebla was told that if the marriage with Joanna were concluded, Henry would make war upon the African infidels, or if Spain declined to plunge into an African war, he could fight the Turk in Hungary. "It is believed in England," said De Puebla, in reporting this conversation, "that the English bowmen could in a few years conquer the whole of Africa." [1] CHAP. V.

That Henry desired to obtain the government of Castile was considered by Bacon to be improbable, on the general ground that the king's courses were never found to be enterprising or adventurous. It is, however, clear from the Spanish despatches that Bacon was in error, and that the Castilian design distinctly entered into the counsels of the king. What shape that design would have assumed had Joanna been persuaded to marry Henry, whether Henry would have gone to Castile in person, whether he would have permitted the government to have been carried on by the cortes, or sent out an English lord deputy, or exchanged his claims for a round sum of money, we have no means of determining. His was not a vision framed for distant horizons, nor delighting in bold prospects, and time alone could show whether the possession of Castile might be combined with domestic security. Meanwhile other projects were put on foot no less menacing to Ferdinand. It had been an old design framed in 1499, but afterwards suspended by Franco-Burgundian contracts, that the Lady Mary should wed the Archduke Charles, heir-presumptive to the Hapsburg and Spanish inheritance, and the greatest match in Europe. This was revived at the instance of Maximilian on September 14, 1506, after some intricate negotiation, and embodied in a treaty on December 21, 1507. Charles was to marry Mary in person or by proxy before the ensuing Easter, and the marriage was to be contracted *per verba de præsenti* within forty days after the archduke should have completed his fourteenth year. Henry bound himself to pay 250,000 crowns

[1] *Calendar State Papers, Spain*, i., 552.

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as his daughter's dowry, and a like sum was accepted by the parties to the treaty as the penalty for impeding the conclusion of the marriage. In consenting to the arrangement Maximilian, as he cynically avowed to his daughter, was mainly actuated by the prospect of a draft from the long purse of the English king; but the alliance satisfied interests of a more permanent character than that.

The commercial struggle with the Flemings was composed by an alleviation of the "Evil Intercourse"; and for the next two years the government of the Netherlands found in Henry a sage counsellor and a firm ally during a period of considerable embarrassment. For England the betrothal of the Lady Mary was a diplomatic triumph, which far outweighed the refusal of Margaret of Savoy or the delay of Joanna of Castile to listen to Henry's matrimonial overtures. Concluded without Ferdinand's consent, it could be used as a lever to extract concessions from him. An English princess was to wed the young heir of Castile; and the King of Aragon must not only sanction the arrangement, but pay in hard cash the whole of his daughter's dower, or else he might see the King of England and the Prince of Wales wedded into France, his daughter left widowed and destitute, and himself deprived of his Castilian governorship. When in 1508 Maximilian embarked upon a war against Venice, hope ran high in the English court. If the King of the Romans could master Italy, he could easily expel Ferdinand from Castile and establish Charles and Mary in that country. That the design might be the more smoothly executed, Henry consistently urged some composition in the affair of Guelders, saying that the King of France would rather lose his crown than permit the duke to be destroyed, and that a truce must be made. Nor did he abandon all hope of Margaret. On July 20, 1508, a solemn embassy was sent to Maximilian to reopen the suit.

But a breeze from Italy blew away the heavy cloud which had settled over Aragon, and shattered the subtle web of English diplomacy. The imperial forces were defeated at the battle of Cadore, and, largely by the astute machinations of the curia, a plot was devised whereby Aragon and the empire, France and the papacy, might sink their differences to join in a common attack upon the republic of Venice. A congress was summoned to meet at Cambray to give effect to this design, and also to

reconcile Duke Charles of Guelders with the government of the archduke. Rarely has Europe witnessed so surprising a change of diplomatic scenery. Ferdinand, a few months ago almost isolated and menaced by a formidable coalition, is now a member of a conspiracy in which all the great powers of Europe save England have taken shares, and from which they are expecting to derive substantial profits. So little was the situation appreciated in England that in November, 1508, Henry sent to Margaret to urge that Ferdinand should be excluded from the congress, and that overtures should be made to France to detach that power from Aragon by an alliance between the Prince of Wales and the sister of the Duke of Angoulême. But Louis was more intent upon the expansion of his Milanese possessions than upon the promotion of English designs in Castile. The league of Cambray was signed on December 10. A week later a marriage by proxy took place between Charles and Mary at Richmond. Nor were the two events entirely disconnected. In consideration for the proffer of his grandson, Maximilian received a loan of 50,000 crowns to help him towards his Italian enterprise. CHAP. V.

On April 21, 1509, while the great commercial republic was fighting for its life, Henry VII. passed away at the age of fifty-two. "He was born," says his great biographer, "at Pembroke Castle, and lieth buried at Westminster in one of the stateliest and daintiest monuments of Europe both for the chapel and for the sepulchre." The monument which Bacon has raised to the first of the Tudors need fear no comparison with the superb recumbent figures carved by the chisel of Torregiano. That "he was one of the best sort of wonders; a wonder for wise men," was the source of his attraction to that master of ripe wisdom and opulent language, who saw in this careworn, unheroic figure, the intellect, the tact, the sedulous attention to business, the undeviating purpose which guided England out of the ways of strife and made possible the stable glories of the Elizabethan age. It will not be denied that the reign was lacking in lustre, and Shakespeare, who has written the dramatic epic of English history, leaves Henry upon the field of Bosworth at the moment of his supreme and youthful triumph. But however deficient it may have been in dramatic relevance, the achievement of the reign was solid and

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enduring. The new dynasty was safeguarded from external attack by a series of alliances with foreign powers, while the marriage of Margaret and James paved the way to the lasting union of the Thistle and the Rose. For good or evil Ireland was linked more firmly to the sister isle, while at home a strong and vigilant administration wore out the spirit of civil disturbance. "He would like to govern England in the French fashion," said the Spanish ambassador Ayala, "but he cannot do it";[1] and indeed Henry's system of government may have been suggested by the models with which his exiled youth had been familiar. He chose his councillors from churchmen, lawyers, and soldiers, and, if we except his own relations, the only members of the nobility who occupied high place were the Earls of Oxford and of Surrey. Talent and loyalty superseded the factious influences of splendid lineage. Many of the men who helped Henry in his task of government had shared the hardships of his exile, such as Guildford, Bray, Daubeny, Edgecombe, and Poynings; others like Morton, Fox, and Warham had risen from lowly stations by sheer force of intellect and character through the democratic avenue of the Church; others again like Empson and Dudley were talented and serviceable lawyers. The sun of the old feudal aristocracy had set. By the instrument of the Star-chamber the crown was able to punish all the abuses which were especially associated with feudal power. A large number of estates had passed to the crown by attainder and confiscation; new creations were dealt out with a sparing hand; and, as in France, so in England, the nobility were fast becoming a nobility of the court, required to glitter at tournaments and festivals, rather than to contribute to the deliberations of the council board.

Though not without serious blemishes the government was free from some of the peculiar failings of autocracy. There were no court favourites; there was no jealousy of able men; there was no megalomania. The king's eye was all-pervading. He sat often in his council, informed his judgment and deferred to its advice. "He was full," says Bacon, "of notes and memorials of his own hand, especially touching persons: as whom to employ, whom to reward, whom to inquire of, whom to beware of, what were the dependencies, what were the

[1] *Calendar State Papers, Spain*, i., 210.

factions, and the like; keeping, as it were, a journal of his thoughts." There was nothing too small for his attention. Bacon remembers having seen an account-book of Empson's, almost every leaf of which was signed by the king's own hand, and not a shilling was lost at the butts or the card table, at tennis or at chess, which was not entered in the accounts of the privy purse.

In the eyes of his contemporaries Henry appeared to be a paragon of kingly prudence. "His body," says Vergil, "was graceful but firm and strong; his stature just above the average; his face beautiful, especially when he was talking gaily; his eyes were grey; he had few teeth; his hair was sparse; his mind great and sagacious and not averse from letters; his spirit strong and excellent, and in the hour of greatest danger gifted with all but superhuman powers. He was moderate, honest, frugal, and kind, and well noted for his aversion to pride and arrogance. He allowed no one to usurp his authority, saying that 'he wished to rule, not to be ruled'. He was a most strict guardian of justice, and by this one thing he specially bound his people to him. He was clement, and could often rehabilitate men who had been condemned by the courts, wishing as he would say 'to see their plumes grow again,' and his policy, as he used himself to declare, was directed not to the accumulation of treasure but to the coercion of a fierce people who had been nurtured in faction."

In a sermon delivered upon the occasion of the king's funeral, Bishop Fisher pronounced a similar eulogy. "His politic wisdom in governance it was singular; his wit always quick and ready; his reason pithy and substantial; his memory fresh and holding; his experience notable; his counsels fortunate and taken by wise deliberation; his speech gracious in diverse languages; his person goodly and amiable, his natural complexion of the purest mixture; his issue fair and in good number. Leagues and confederacies he had with all Christian princes; his mighty power was dread everywhere, not only within his realm but without also; his people were to him in as humble subjection as ever they were to king, his land many a day in peace and tranquillity; his prosperity in battle against his enemies was marvellous, his dealing in times of perils and dangers was cold and sober with great hardiness. If any treason were conspired

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against him, it came out wonderfully; his treasure and riches incomparable; his buildings most goodly and after the newest cast all of pleasure." Though he made no pretence to the knowledge of the schoolman, he observed all the conventions of orthodoxy. He went upon pilgrimage to Walsingham and Canterbury, founded six religious houses, and built the Savoy hospital which was designed to give shelter to a hundred poor persons. "There was in his realm," declares Fisher, "no virtuous man that he might be credibly informed of, but he gave him a continual remembrance yearly and daily to pray for him, some ten marks and some ten pounds."[1] Three popes sent him the complimentary gifts of a sword and a cap of maintenance. The Knights of Rhodes chose him to be their protector. Yet his conscience was uneasy, and at the last, haunted by remorse for the shortcomings of his government, he promised his confessor that he would improve the administration of justice, promote able, learned, and virtuous men in the Church, and grant a general pardon to his people "touching the dangers and jeopardies of his lawes for things done in time past". Nor was the expression of these contrite feelings confined to the confessional. He told his servants that "if it pleased God to send him life, they should find him a new changed man".

There was ample room for amendment. The king's chief ministers, Empson and Dudley, had become notorious for rapacity and injustice, and the diseased spot in the government was all the more malignant for being nourished by some motives not altogether disreputable. That power depended upon wealth was a political axiom which the fall of the Lancastrian dynasty no less than the statecraft of Louis XI. was calculated to impress upon the mind. Henry found an empty treasury, and he had to build up his fiscal system from the foundations. His first parliament granted him the customs for life, and during the course of the reign these rose from £32,600 to £42,000, or an increase of 28 per cent.[2] The restitution of all the crown lands which had been alienated since October 2, 1455, was a revolutionary measure, disturbing many vested interests and accompanied by much hardship, but sanctioned by parliament

[1] *The English Works of John Fisher* (Early English Text Society, extr. ser., xxvii., 1876), pp. 268-88.

[2] Schanz, ii., 46; Busch, *England under the Tudors*, p. 283.

and necessary to the proper conduct of the government. Once admitted, the principle of forced resumption was easily overstrained. Properties were claimed which had been alienated as far back as the times of Edward III.; contracts were torn up; and the way was paved for innumerable acts of lucrative oppression. An Italian visitor calculates that the revenue derived from the crown lands alone amounted to 547,000 crowns, or £109,400.[1] Compared with these stable and elastic sources of revenue, the parliamentary supply was small and intermittent. During a reign of twenty-four years Henry only five times applied for parliamentary grants, and of these the second was only demanded to make up the deficiencies in the first, while two grants only were made during the last eighteen years of the reign.

That parliamentary taxation was specially unpopular seems to be established by the fact that the levy of 1489 produced a serious rising in Northumberland, and that the raising of two fifteenths and tenths in 1497 drove the Cornishmen to revolt. And besides its unpopularity with the common folk, parliamentary taxation was liable to another objection in the king's eyes. The amount might be contested in parliament itself. When in 1504 Henry claimed the old feudal aids for the knighting of his eldest son and the dowry of his eldest daughter, his agents had to meet a formidable opposition led by the most eloquent young lawyer in London, Thomas More, and to accept a composition. For these reasons Henry was more and more thrown back upon extra-parliamentary sources of revenue, upon land, customs, feudal dues, the profits of coinage and judicial fines, loans and benevolences, not to speak of foreign treaties and private mercantile speculations in wool, tin, and wine.

Such a system, though irregular and liable to great abuse, might be made to serve a valuable political end. It was undoubtedly one of Henry's main objects to abase and impoverish the nobility, and by mulcting wealth wherever wealth was found to destroy the nerves of political opposition. The exactions of Empson and Dudley enabled him to do this. What precise official position these two men occupied cannot be clearly determined. A contemporary speaks of them as "fiscal judges," but the term is vague, and it is certain that neither Empson nor Dudley was a judge in the ordinary sense of the term.

[1] *Italian Relation of England*, p. 49.

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As privy councillors, however, and Bacon speaks of them as "lawyers in science and privy councillors in authority," they might exercise judicial functions, and it became subsequently one of the charges against Empson that he summoned people to his private house in St. Bride's parish, and committed them to the Tower, the Fleet, and other prisons. Lord Herbert of Cherbury speaks of Empson as "master and surveyor of the king's forfeits," and Grafton states that in the last year of Henry's reign Empson and Dudley were named special commissioners for enforcing the penal laws under some new patent. But whether they acted as a committee of the privy council or under some special patent, there can be no question that they obtained the king's entire acceptance of a policy as bold as it was unscrupulous and unpopular.

At what particular date this policy was formed is again a matter of uncertainty. In all probability it was built up by degrees. But though the worst excesses seem to belong to the concluding period of the king's life, after the death of the queen and Prince Arthur, it is worth noting that the two "ravening wolves," as they are called in Holinshed's *Chronicle*, had established for themselves a position of authority at a very early period in the reign. Dudley, a lawyer of good family, son of John Dudley, the sheriff for Sussex in 1485, and connected with the baronial family of that name, attracted the king's notice soon after his accession, and was made a member of the privy council. Empson, though of humbler birth—he was the son of a sieve-maker at Towcester—was speaker of the parliament of 1491, and five years later his name was associated with that of Fox as responsible for unpopular exactions in a proclamation issued by Perkin Warbeck. It is clear, however, that as late as 1497 the two men had not become intimately associated in the popular mind with fiscal abuses, for the Cornish rebels reserved their fury for Morton, Fox, Bray, and Lovell. The great unpopularity of Morton with the commons, and the legend of Morton's fork, at least point to an older and more exalted authority for these questionable proceedings; and it is well to remember that the fining of Sir William Capell, alderman of London, "for the breaking of certain statutes and acts of parliament made before-time," took place in 1495, well within the lifetime of Morton and Bray.

If, then, Empson and Dudley first suggested the plan of using the criminal law as an engine of extortion, it was adopted and endorsed by older and more influential men. It is clear that Sir Reginald Bray cannot have disapproved of Empson, for he made him his executor, and Morton and Fox are unlikely to have reprobated an ingenuity so analogous to their own.

When the older councillors were removed by death, Empson and Dudley sprang to the fore. In 1504 Empson was chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, and in the same year Dudley was speaker of the house of commons. Their insolence knew no bounds. They wrote letters to the sheriffs nominating the knights of the shire who were to be returned; they fined, imprisoned, and browbeat juries; they committed persons to jail on their own authority; they trespassed boldly upon the province of the common-law courts. Nobody could feel himself secure from prosecution or from loss. Wards were not permitted to enter into their estates upon reaching their majority until they had paid a heavy composition. Estates were wrongly claimed as tenures in chief, and their owners compelled to pay a stiff fine for leave to traverse. When men were outlawed in personal actions, they were forced to pay enormous sums for their charters of freedom. Every infraction of law, however obsolete the law, however antiquated the infraction, was liable to be raked up and punished by a fine, and a swarm of promoters, one of them an Italian, were employed in the odious office of exploration and assessment. Letters were sent to the judges from the privy council to suggest, or rather to dictate, verdicts. Sheriffs were bribed, and wherever the interest of the fisc intruded itself, the interests of justice were made to suffer. The wealthy merchants of the city of London were specially designed to replenish the royal purse. In 1505 the confirmation of the liberties of the city was bought from the king for 5,000 marks. In 1507 Thomas Kneysworth, the lord mayor, and the two sheriffs, suffered "over-painful imprisonment in the Marshalsea," and were condemned in great sums of money, while Sir William Capell, who had been fined £2,000 in 1495, was "again put on examination by the suit of the king for things done by him in the time of his mayoralty," four years previously, was fined another £2,000, and sent to the Tower. Sir Robert Cotton, who saw a book of acquittances between the

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king and Dudley, tells us that "that whereby he (the king) heaped up his mass of treasure, for he left in bullion £4,500,000 beside his plate, jewels, and rich attire, was by sale of offices, redemption, and penalties, dispensing of laws and such like to the yearly value of £120,000".[1] It was an immense sum, and the process by which it was won inoculated the English government with the attractive poison of pillage.

No small share in this golden harvest was reaped by the agents of the king. A wealthy Londoner, by name Robert Sympson, was arraigned at the Guildhall in 1503 for complicity in the escape of Edmund de la Pole, and his name was placed in the bill of attainder which it was the duty of Speaker Dudley and Sir John Mordaunt to present to parliament. But at the last moment Sympson appears to have purchased absolution. By the order of the king his name was struck out of the bill, and at the same time his valuable suburban property in the region of Bromley and Beckenham passed for a sum of £200 to Richard Guildford, Edmund Dudley and two other members of the king's circle.[2] Clearer and still more curious evidence of private corruption is afforded by the Plumpton correspondence. Sir Robert Plumpton was a substantial Yorkshire landowner with a long pedigree, a stone turreted manor-house and rights of chase and warren in his park. He had attended Henry on his progress to York in the first year of the reign; he was present at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth; he was twice concerned in suppressing a revolt of the commons in Yorkshire, and he was twice specially thanked by the king for his services. Yet none of these things availed to protect him against the machinations of Empson, and after a long campaign of unscrupulous chicanery the affluent squire was driven into a debtor's prison.[3]

We have it on Bacon's authority that Dudley was eloquent, and a treatise from his pen written from prison at the beginning of the next reign, and entitled *The Tree of Commonwealth*, gives evidence of a wide outlook and fine powers. In this curious and elaborate palinode Dudley surveys the vices of the govern-

[1] *A Discourse of Foreign War*, p. 52.

[2] MS. Statute Rolls in the Victoria Tower, Westminster; Hasted, *History of Kent*, ed. Drake, part i., p. 271.

[3] *The Plumpton Correspondence*, ed. Stapleton, 1839.

ment which he had served and of the society which he had contributed to deprave, tenders his advice to the new sovereign, and expounds his conception of the perfect commonwealth. There is no more interesting commentary upon Henry VII.'s reign than this treatise from one of his leading councillors, revealing as it does not only many malpractices in Church and state, but also the existence of unrealised plans of fiscal aggression. "Restrain yourself," says the author, addressing the young king, "from appropriation of benefices or to unite any house of religion to another, for if this do continue it shall by all likelyhood destroy the honour of the Church of England." It would seem from this that the wealth of the monasteries had been attracting the attention of the royal council, and that a scheme was on foot for monastic consolidation, with a view to the appropriation of the revenues of the smaller houses. It was not an unnatural idea to float before the minds of such men as Empson and Dudley. For them the Church was already fair prey. "Your progenitors," writes Dudley, "used much to write to their subjects spiritual and temporal for to have the disposition of their promotions, which was a great discouragement for clerks." The king sold patronage, appointed bishops, enjoyed the revenues of vacant sees, and employed ecclesiastical benefices as the rewards for secular services. And why should the king's appetite be stayed here? Why should he not reach out his hand towards the tempting platter of monastic opulence? After warning his new master against "young, cruel, and covetous counsellors," Dudley proceeds to enumerate the special evils which required correction—the browbeating of judges by letters from the privy council and the secretary; the appointment of sheriffs, who were "affectionate as bribers"; the absence of any adequate penalty for perjury; the maintenance and embracery practised by men of power and authority; the imprisonment and vexation of the king's subjects "by privy seal or letters missive or otherwise by any of the king's particular councillors".

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In language which suggests the reflection that Dudley may have been specially responsible for some of the legislation of the reign, we are told that the poor must not clothe themselves in the livery of lords, or use unlawful games, or be tempted to usury "plain or coloured"; that, what by "untrue making" and what by "subtle demeanour" in the hands of

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the adventurers and merchants, English cloth was losing its repute abroad and that English wool was in the like case, to the great prejudice of the king and his subjects and also to the infamy and rebuke of the people of this realm. Every class in society should be content with its own position and destiny. "Let the commons not smatter in matters of divinity lest the infection of heresies creep in withall." In the same way "the chivalry" must not arrogate any right to the posts and offices of dignity which are properly within the gift of the crown. The clergy are advised to spend money on exhibitions and scholarships at the university, to leave off "purchasing of lands," and to diminish their diet. "Look well upon your two universities how famous they have been and in what condition they are now. Where be your famous men that were wont to read divinity in every cathedral church and in other great monasteries? Where be the good and substantial scholars of grammar that have been kept in this realm before this time not only in every good town and city and in other places, but also in abbeys and priories, in prelates' houses, and often times in the houses of men of honour of the temporality." Dudley complains that "the noblemen and gentlemen of England were the worst brought up for the more part of any realm in Christendom; that benefices are given not to the virtuous or the learned, but to such as can be good and profitable stewards of houses and clerks of your kitchens, or to such as with good policy can survey your lands and can well increase your fines and casualities, . . . and to such as can surely and wisely be receivers of your rents and revenues, and rather than fail will boldly distrain a poor man's cattle and drive them to pound till they starve from hunger". It was an old cry that ecclesiastical preferments depended on worldly interest. To promote a lawsuit in Church courts costly bulls must be obtained from Rome, and if a rich drover could advance the necessary cash, it was a fair requital to put his nephew or younger son into a living. A university training had become a mere farce: a master's degree could be obtained after a year's study, and boys of ten or twelve passed through Oxford or Cambridge to archdeaconries or prebends before they had even learned to say mattins.

This denunciation of the worldly and litigious spirit of the

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Church would go for little were it supported by nothing save the unattested word of a discredited politician making a last self-conscious adieu to mundane vanities. But Dudley's unctuous denunciations do not stand alone. In the parliament of 1485 a statute was passed giving to archbishops, bishops, and other ordinaries having episcopal jurisdiction power to commit clerks to prison for offences against chastity, and that this power was needed is made clear from subsequent disclosures. The London clergy were in a great state of demoralisation; priests were found loitering in pot-houses and taverns; clerks discarded the tonsure, and flaunted themselves in long hair and the fashionable garments of the town exquisite. A wide surface was exposed to the artillery of the satirist; and the preachers at St. Paul's Cross inflamed the animosity of their lay hearers against the clerks by pictures of the degradation of the Church and its appointed ministers.[1] A few patent malpractices would give a spice to these jeremiads, and the convocation of Canterbury summoned in February, 1486, caught alarm at so rash a divulgation of domestic scandals. The prior of St. John's and two elders from each of the mendicant orders were summoned to St. Paul's church, and warned that in future clerical sinners were to be denounced to the ordinary, and not gibbeted for the pleasure of city merchants and apprentices. Then followed a letter from Archbishop Morton to the Bishop of London directed to enforce clerical attire and clerical residence. The wearing of swords and daggers and all kinds of lay attire was carefully proscribed, and bishops were enjoined to see that the parishes did not go entirely unshepherded while their incumbents were enjoying the pleasures of non-residence under the special sanction of the apostolic see.

But the abuse of pluralities and absenteeism was too deeply ingrained in the ecclesiastical system to be effectually corrected by an archiepiscopal letter; and the evil was not least conspicuous in the highest ranks of the clergy. The energies of the three greatest prelates of the reign, Morton, Fox, and Warham, were almost entirely consumed in the business of the state; and Hudson, who wrote the history of the Star-chamber in the reign of Charles I., tells us that the court was most

[1] Wilkins, *Concilia*, iii., 618, 619.

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commonly frequented by seven or eight bishops every sitting day. It is probable that the exacting claims which the state made upon the English bishops prevented the episcopal office in this country from falling into the hands of dull or incompetent men. The bishops in England were alike less numerous and more fully occupied than the bishops in Italy or France, and they preserved a higher level of respectability. That their occupations were so largely secular is the fault rather of the state which imposed, than of the individual who accepted, the temptations of a political career. But the inconvenience of the system was clear. Sees were neglected by their bishops, and a secular ideal was set before the clerical profession by its most conspicuous members.[1]

It is seldom that the moral standard in any calling can be maintained at a much higher level than that which prevails in the world around it, and many of the clergy of Henry VII.'s reign were neither better nor worse than the knights, squires, or yeomen from whose families they were drawn, or upon whose favours they depended for advancement. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge had scarcely issued from the period of their deepest depression, and those who had attained middle life at the accession of Henry VII. can never have tasted the delights of living or fruitful inquiry. The monasteries had long ceased to produce great chronicles, and though here and there a learned and zealous monk might be found, cherishing the last embers of Anglo-Saxon learning, or expounding the newly discovered treasures of Hellenic antiquity, the tribute of the cloister to the intellectual advance of the nation was now almost negligible. Nor had any great teacher arisen in England since the days of Wycliffe, and the doom of Bishop Pecock must still have been remembered in ecclesiastical circles as a stern monition against ingenious thinking. Unfortified by the influence of a stimulating academic education, and with their professional standard disorganised by civil disturbance, the clergy, even if they partly escaped the general laxity of manners, lost their special position of spiritual pre-eminence.

It was a time in which land was passing rapidly from hand

[1] The absentee incumbents of Durham and Winchester were admonished to reside by a non-resident prelate (*Register of Bishop Fox*, ed. E. C. Batten, intr., pp. 56, 75).

to hand. Old families were breaking up, and new families were pushing their way into pre-eminence, as the wholesale confiscations of the civil wars poured into the market the parklands and ploughlands, the castles and manor-houses, the chases and the warrens, of the beaten party. In these circumstances the appetite for land became a passion, a passion unchecked by many of the modern counter-charms to land hunger. In the absence of alternative interests or modes of investment the acquisition of land was a concern not less important than the pursuit of the stag, the heron, or the fox. To neither passion was the Church a stranger, and the judicial records of the reign, so far as they have been discovered and printed, show that the spirit of the land-grabber and the litigant was by no means confined to the squirearchy. The land-hunger of the baron was matched by the land-hunger of the prelates; tithe claims were met by tithe denials; riotous attack by riotous defence. Especially numerous were the suits between the great abbeys and their urban neighbours. CHAP. V.

While our evidence is too fragmentary to permit a full or adequate survey of the condition of the monasteries, it certainly conveys the impression that many houses had fallen into a state of degradation. At the request of the king, Pope Innocent VIII. issued a bull in 1490, enjoining a visitation of all the religious houses in England, and giving to the visitors powers of suspension, deprivation, and expulsion. That some such measure was urgently required is shown by a letter addressed by Archbishop Morton to the Abbot of St. Albans in 1491. The monks of St. Albans are accused of having entirely neglected their proper duties of contemplation and regular observance, of hospitality and alms. Acts of lust and violence had defiled the sanctity of the abbey church, and two neighbouring and dependent priories had been converted into houses of ill-fame. The cups and jewels of the abbey had been embezzled, and even the bier of its patron saint had not escaped the rapacious hands of these monastic banditti, who sold the timber and squandered the affluence of their house. For so flagrant a case, the measure of correction meted out by the primate appears to have been singularly inefficacious. The abbot was invited to reform himself and his house within thirty days upon pain of an actual archiepiscopal visitation.[1] How far

[1] Wilkins, *Concilia*, iii., 632-4.

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any genuine reform could proceed from a source so polluted we are left to imagine, and we are ignorant as to whether any further steps were taken. But maladministration and disorder were not peculiar to St. Albans. In 1503 the country was startled to hear that the prior of the Charterhouse at Sheen had been foully murdered by one of his monks. The motives of this tragedy, rare in the monastic annals of England, are unexplained, and it would be unfair to condemn an institution on the ground of a single act of passionate or deliberate crime. It is more common to find peculation than murder, self-indulgence than violence, and neglect of obvious duties than gross and flagrant vice. The revenues of the priory of Bath were more than competent to support its sixteen inmates, and the prior, though he pleaded poverty before the Star-chamber, rode abroad with some eighteen liveried attendants. Yet through the neglect of successive priors the conventual church of Bath was allowed to fall into a disgraceful state of ruin, and the administration of the monastic property was marked by waste, greed, and inefficiency.[1] The mitred abbey of Malmesbury seems to have been equally unfortunate in its rulers. Abbot Aylie, who died in 1479, provided for his natural son from the revenues of the abbey estates, and if we are to believe the plaintiff in Carter *v.* the Abbot of Malmesbury in 1500, his successor, Abbot Olverton, was guilty of gross acts of cruelty and oppression. He sent a band of armed retainers to reclaim an emancipated bondman, impounded his livestock, loaded him with ponderous irons, and chained him to a stake in the monastic prison.

The records of a visitation held by Bishop Goldwell in the diocese of Norwich in 1492, are evidence not indeed of general corruption—for the condition of a great majority of the houses in the county was reported to be satisfactory—but of some gross cases of disorder. Of this laxity the priory of Norwich afforded a conspicuous example. "It was reported that women slept within the monastic precincts; that jewels had been stolen; that offices were not duly distributed; that the sub-sacristan squandered the money of the house; that the

[1] Bishop King effected a drastic reform in 1500 (Britton, *History and Antiquities of Bath Abbey Church*, pp. 200, 201; W. Hunt, *Two Chartularies of Bath Priory* (Somerset Record Society, vol. vii.), intr., pp. lxvii., viii.; Leadam, *Select Cases in the Star Chamber*, intr., p. 22 ff.).

infirmary was ill-kept; that the rule of silence was broken in the choir, the cloister and the dormitory; that laymen sat at table with the monks; that the monks conversed with loose women; and that to the great scandal of the priory no scholars were sent to study in the University of Oxford. At Wymondham abbey the monks "buy and sell as if they were merchants," hunt with hawks and hounds, fail to repair the dormitory and infirmary, idle away their time, and refuse to apply themselves to books. At Bockenham the prior is partial, arbitrary, secretive, and the sub-prior strongly suspected of an illicit amour. Elsewhere we learn either that the school is neglected, or that the abbey jewels are in pawn, or that buildings are in ruin, or that there are internal dissensions, or that "more hounds are kept than are necessary". The visitations of the Premonstratensian houses show that penalties, in themselves adequate, were inflicted for the gravest vices, but too often relaxed if the offender was penitent and his brethren interceded for him. Here, too, maladministration and small breaches of discipline seem to be more common than flagrant vice. Yet it must be remembered that if some of the charges were the fabrication of envy and spite; there may in other cases have been a conspiracy of silence as to actions which deserved the severest censure. The system of delation, however necessary, is always odious and often of no effect. It would break down just where it was most needed, in cases where corruption was complete and evil was unanimous.

The discipline of the secular clergy would seem to have been stricter, and some of the bishops afforded an example of pastoral energy and zeal. But the canons of cathedral and collegiate churches were often non-resident, and left their functions to be discharged by men of an inferior class, who neglected their duties and sometimes gave scandal to the neighbourhood. The visitations of the collegiate chapter of Southwell show us that slackness and vice were not the monopoly of the regulars, and that an idle community of vicars choral planted down in a dull little country town might succumb to the temptations of the chase, the tavern, or the dice-box.

Meanwhile the old leaven of the Lollard heresies was still secretly fermenting here and there in lowly and devout households. In 1489, two laymen, Swallow and Barbour, were charged before the primate with holding that the Eucharist is

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material bread, that any good man is a priest, that the images of saints are not to be venerated, that the pope is a harlot sitting over many waters having the cup of death in his hands, and that all priests are the disciples of Antichrist. Opinions so radical and revolutionary as these are not likely to have been very widely held, and Barbour recanted them, and so obtained absolution. Yet several attested cases of martyrdom prove that the Church was now confronted not only with the random thoughts of idle spirits, loosely held and lightly renounced, but with a core of doctrine hardened and storm-proof, for which men and women were content to lay down their lives. On April 28, 1494, an old woman of eighty years or more named Joan Boughton was burnt at Smithfield "for many heresies to the number of nine articles of heresy, and never would turn from the said heresies for none exhortation, but in the said false and erroneous opinions died".[1] Recantation was, however, more common than martyrdom. After recording how two heretics stood at Paul's Cross on January 22, 1497, and two others in the ensuing February, and one Hugh a glover of Kent on Passion Sunday, the city chronicler proceeds as follows: "At the Sunday next before St. Paul's stood four Lollards with the book of their lore hanging about them, which book was at the time of the sermon there burnt with the faggot the said Lollards had. And among their erroneous opinions one was that the sacrament of the altar was but natural bread; and another was that it was lawful for a man and a woman to be joined together at all times of the year no season except." Twelve heretics stood at Paul's Cross "shrynd with faggots" in 1499; and the new century was inaugurated by a burning at Smithfield.

Nor were these manifestations of heterodoxy confined to the capital. In May, 1498, a priest was burned for heresy at Canterbury, "which by the king's exhortation before he died was converted from his erroneous opinions and died a Christian man, whereof his grace had great honour". Norwich and Salisbury had their respective martyrs. As Lawrence Guest was burning at the stake at Salisbury "for the matter of the sacrament, one of the Bishop's men threw a firebrand at his face, whereat the brother of the said Lawrence

[1] Cotton MS., Vitellius A. xvi., f. 148. Kingsford, *Chronicles of London*, p. 200.

standing by ran at him with his dagger and would have slain him had he not been otherwise stayed". But the principal home of Lollardy seems to have been among the villages and small towns of Buckinghamshire. That charming county of rich pastures and mighty beechwoods, the home of Hampden and of William Penn, has always been prominent in the history of English nonconformity. Not far removed from Oxford and Lutterworth, the two chief centres of Wycliffe's activity, it was traversed by the Lollard preachers who found in the remote and sylvan villages of the southern Chilterns responsive and faithful hearts. The peasants and chapmen of South Bucks, situated as they were at the very extremity of the huge diocese of Lincoln, appear to have preserved their heresies despite the intermittent notice of the bishop for more than a century. In 1506, however, a storm burst over the village of Amersham. A man was burned, and twenty-four of his comrades in heresy, male and female, were compelled to carry faggots, to wear badges, and to do public penance. "In which number," says Foxe, "was also one Robert Bartlet, a rich man, who for his profession's sake was put out of his farm and goods and was condemned to be kept in the monastery of Asridge, where he wore on his right sleeve a square piece of cloth the space of seven years together." About the same time a certain Father Roberts was burned at Buckingham and above twenty persons condemned to carry faggots. But even these drastic measures were insufficient to stamp out the disease. Two or three years later Thomas Barnard, a husbandman, and James Mordon, a labourer, were burned at Amersham at one fire, and thirty persons were branded in the right cheek. The victims were lowly, and the particulars of the faith for which they suffered, save that they would talk against superstition and idolatry, and were desirous to hear and read the Holy Scriptures, are lost beyond retrieve; yet stories lingered on in the villages of Buckinghamshire of hardships bravely endured by "godly women and manly martyrs of Christ," and they have passed into the martyrology of Foxe, glorified perhaps in their passage down the murmuring avenues of rumour, and inflamed with the indignation of a later strife.[1]

[1] *Acts and Monuments*, iv., 123-25; *A History of Buckinghamshire*, i., 298, 299 (Victoria County History); W. H. Summers, *The Lollards of the Chiltern Hills*.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DAWN OF THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE.

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DURING the first decade of the sixteenth century the art of Italy enters into its full splendour and maturity. It was within this period that Leonardo da Vinci painted the haunting and subtle portrait of Mona Lisa, whose olive face shines with such mysterious witchery upon the walls of the Louvre; it was now that Michael Angelo completed his puissant statue of David; that the two great masters of Venetian colouring, Giorgione and Titian, received their first important commissions, and that Raphael was invited to Rome to fresco the halls and colonnades of the Vatican. In comparison with this great outburst of artistic power, the contemporary history of England seems poor and gloomy; a close-fisted king served by extortionate agents, a population somewhat cowed and weary, a diplomacy full of curious and shifty projects, no steady recourse to parliament, but a government of spies and harpies, no war —for the development of artillery had caused an eclipse in the military prowess of England and spoiled the value of her national weapon—nor any reverberation of great martial feats or large national movements, and in the immediate retrospect nothing but the slow and painful exhalation of the long-stored poisons of dynastic strife. Yet despite much that was uncomfortable and even sordid in her political history, England was beginning to feel something of that vivid Italian life which provided a quickening inspiration to all the countries in Europe. Poetry indeed was hardly alive, and though the red dragon of Cadwallader and the white greyhound of York were blazoned on many a piece of royal brickwork at Sheen or Eltham or Greenwich, the influence of the Italian renaissance had not yet begun to affect the work of the English architect or mason.

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The chapel of Henry VII., begun in 1503, is a specimen of the perpendicular style, entirely devoid of Italian touches, and the employment of the great Florentine sculptor Pietro Torregiano to carve the tomb of the king and queen was the result rather of a happy and fruitful accident than of a deliberate preference for Italian workmanship. Of English portrait painting and English frescoes little can be said, save that the faint and mutilated colouring which has been discovered in several of our medieval churches seems to betoken some home-bred taste. The art of illumination, everywhere extinguished by the diffusion of printed books, had been lost far sooner in England than in Italy or France, and it would be impossible to match the exquisite paintings of Jean Fouquet, the illuminator attached to the court of Louis XI., by any specimen of English workmanship in the fifteenth century. Indeed if we except the domestic architecture and the metal work of the time, there was something medieval, esoteric, and traditional in the national art. Screens and bench ends, often of great beauty and richness, were carved for churches; glass would be painted, and the walls of the sacred buildings would be adorned with Madonna and Child, with patriarchs, prophets, and apostles. But the taste for the beautiful was for the most part unskilled and undeveloped, nor is it possible to suppose that if in 1503 the Laokoon had been discovered in the orchards of Stepney instead of in a Roman vineyard it would have attracted a stream of rapturous connoisseurs from the city of London.

It was rather in the domain of literature and science than in the field of art that the England of Henry's day came into closest contact with the main stream of European culture. As old as the conversion, and arising naturally from the position of Rome as the ecclesiastical capital of Latin Christianity, the connexion between Italy and England had been recently fortified by the attractiveness of the new learning which had its home in the Italian cities. English scholars had all through the middle ages been in the habit of frequenting the famous universities of Italy, and in general they had brought home with them a cargo of ecclesiastical law. But the booty now to be obtained from an Italian visit was more brilliant and alluring than anything which a course of lectures upon Gratian or the Decretals could provide. The revival of humanism, and

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in particular the recovery of the lost treasure of Hellenic literature, constitutes one of the most exciting chapters in the intellectual history of the world. A new feeling for beauty, and a new conception of what knowledge was and of what it could do for man, was combined with a series of thrilling literary and artistic discoveries, following one upon another in such swift succession that the mind reeled under the opulent achievements and endless possibilities of research. Princes and politicians discussed the subtleties of Plato in star-lit Florentine gardens; professors recited sonorous Latin hexameters before fashionable and rapturous crowds; new manuscripts were unearthed; great libraries were formed, and in every important Italian city an academy was founded to discuss and expound the treasures of classical literature. The newly invented art of printing added enormous momentum to the movement. In 1476 the press of Milan issued a Greek grammar; in 1490 a man of genius, Aldo Manuzio, settled in Venice, and addressed himself to the task of printing and publishing the great classics of ancient Greece.

One of the first English scholars who is known to have brought Greek manuscripts to England is William of Selling, or Tilley, member of All Souls' college, Oxford, and subsequently a Benedictine monk, who travelled to Italy in 1464, studied in Padua and Bologna, and returned to spread the knowledge of the humanities among his countrymen as a teacher in the Christ Church school at Canterbury. One of Selling's pupils, and like Selling a fellow of All Souls, was Thomas Linacre, who after accompanying his master upon a mission to the pope to announce the accession of Henry VII., returned to Italy in 1488 to sit at the feet of Poliziano. Linacre's Italian discipleship was singularly fruitful and various. He shared the literary instruction which was given to the two young Medici princes in Florence; he read in the Vatican library; he made friends with Aldo at Venice; he graduated as a doctor of medicine at Padua; he studied under Nicolaus Leonicenus, a celebrated physician and scholar at Vicenza. Passing from Greek philosophy to Greek medicine, he did much to restore the reputation of the classical medical writers and to introduce scientific methods into England. A translation into Latin of *Proclus on the Sphere*, published in 1499, brought him

into the notice of Henry's court, and he was appointed tutor to Prince Arthur. But though he composed a treatise upon Latin grammatical distinctions, the name of Linacre is chiefly connected with the advancement of medical knowledge, with the establishment of the Royal College of Physicians and the foundation of medical lectureships at Oxford and Cambridge, and above all with the translation of the works of Galen, one of which, published at Cambridge in 1521, is said to be the first book printed in England in which the Greek type is used. CHAP. VI.

The example set by Selling and Linacre was speedily followed, and three other members of Oxford university, William Grocyn, William Lily, and William Latimer, drew immediate inspiration from personal contact with the great Italian teachers. The oldest and most conservative of these men was Grocyn of New College, memorable as the first Englishman who gave public lectures upon Greek literature in Oxford. It seems probable enough that Grocyn had imbibed the elements of the Greek language from Cornelio Vitelli, an Italian teacher who had been engaged by Thomas Chaundler, the accomplished warden of his college. Nor is it otherwise than probable that it was from Grocyn's lectures as reader in divinity at Magdalen that Linacre derived his earliest enthusiasm for Greek studies.

The torch once lit burnt brilliantly for a generation, until it was quenched by the bitter waters of religious strife. Grocyn followed Linacre to Italy, and studied for two years under the great Florentine masters Poliziano and the Greek Chalcondylas. The additional equipment, while it made him the more impressive as a teacher, perhaps helped to quicken the high scholarly scrupulosity which is so blighting to production. He has left nothing behind him but an epistle to Aldo Manuzio, an epigram on a lady who pelted him with a snowball, and a reputation for learning, polish, and orthodoxy. In a course of lectures delivered in St. Paul's cathedral upon the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite, Grocyn had vehemently attacked those who had impugned the authorship of the work. A few weeks of close study convinced him that the destructive critics were justified, and he had the courage to retract his opinion before the very audience which had heard it so recently and so confidently expressed.

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A more ardent and innovating spirit was contributed to the Oxford renaissance by John Colet, the eldest son of Sir Henry Colet, a wealthy London merchant, who was thrice mayor of London, and connected by marriage with the family of Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham. Colet, too, drank at the fountain-heads of Italian humanism, visiting France or Italy some time between 1493 and 1496. "He had previously," says Erasmus, "roamed with great zest through literature of every kind; finding most pleasure in the early writers, Dionysius, Origen, Cyprian, Ambrose, and Jerome." He was versed in the canon and civil law; he was an ardent student of Cicero as well as of Plato and Plotinus, and of the English poets, and though the bent of his mind was averse from medieval scholarship, "he did not omit to read Scotus and Thomas and others of that stamp if occasion required it". Of Colet's three years' sojourn abroad next to nothing is known, but it may be surmised that he did not neglect Florence, the headquarters of Italian Platonism, where Ficino had created an atmosphere of mystical speculation, and where it would now be possible to purchase Ficino's famous Latin versions of Plato and Plotinus attired in the trim garb of the Aldine Press.

Colet returned to England imbued with a strong vein of Platonic or neo-Platonic mysticism, a phase of thought and emotion occasionally combined with high capacities for action and an honest gift for estimating experience. For Colet, as for all the Oxford scholars of this period, learned scholarship was ancillary to practical ends. He came back from Italy a reformer of men and methods, having caught, it is tempting to suppose, some sparks from the fiery furnace of Savonarola's eloquence, but with an enthusiasm of the sober English type, finely attempered to the ideals of thoughtful men and devoid of that almost inhuman intensity which is the note of prophetic utterance in Italy. His lectures on St. Paul's epistles delivered in Oxford in 1497 and 1498 mark an epoch in English Biblical exegesis. He sweeps away the subtle cobwebs of scholastic interpretation and the familiar mazes of medieval allegory to interrogate the age in which the text was composed, to call up to life the men for whom it was written and to expound its enduring lessons for human conduct. The young lecturer was pleading for a new standard both in scholarship and in life;

upon the side of scholarship for Greek and Hebrew as essential to an exact understanding of the letter of the Holy Writ, and for history as furnishing one of the clues to its inner spirit; upon the side of life for that simplicity and spiritual ardour which is revealed in the records of the early Church. His attacks upon the ecclesiastical abuses of the time are surprising in their vehemence, and help to explain the diminishing authority of the Church. The sale of bishoprics, the evil custom of pluralities, "the greediness and appetite of honour and dignity in men of the Church," and the irritating litigation concerning tithes which in so many parishes embittered the relations between the priest and his flock, excited the indignation of a reformer who had strong leanings towards apostolic communism. But the "deadliest plague to the Church of Christ" was the Church lawyer, and it is against the members of this profession, "those reciters of formulas" and "watchers for syllables ever spinning their toils, ensnaring the unwary, extorting moneys, heaping together riches," that the artillery of Colet's indignation is chiefly trained. CHAP. VI.

At the root of all these evils was the absence of a sane and living theology. Colet was wholly untouched by the influence of Italian neopaganism, and passages may be culled from his writings which are hardly consistent with the attitude of a humanist. But though unflinching in his fidelity to the orthodox creed and ascetic in the conduct of his own life, he had escaped from the narrow routine of scholastic sciolism. "There was no book so heretical," says a friend and biographer, "but he read it with attention, saying that he often received more benefit from heretical books than from the works of orthodox partisans." As for the Scotists, "he said that he considered them dull and stupid and anything but intellectual. For it was the sign of a poor and barren intellect," he would say, "to be quibbling about the words and opinions of others, carping first at one thing and then at another, and analysing everything so minutely." Moreover, excessive erudition was in his view detrimental to the "natural soundness and simplicity of men's interests, and calculated to make men less healthy minded and less fitted for Christian innocence and for pure and simple charity".[1]

[1] *Erasmi Epist.*, xv., 14; Erasmus's *Lives of Vitrier and Colet*, ed. Lupton, p. 37.

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Our knowledge of this eminent circle of scholars is derived in no small measure from the letters of Erasmus of Rotterdam, who came to Oxford in the autumn of 1499 at the age of thirty-three, and there formed a life-long friendship with the leaders of English humanism. The work of Erasmus, like that of Voltaire, in a later age, is of European rather than of national significance, consisting as it did in the diffusion of simple, human, and natural ideals through northern Europe, and that not only by means of biting and incessant criticism of the twin enemies of good letters, the monks and the scholastic theologians, but also by large, courageous, and fruitful achievements in the realm of Biblical scholarship. For such a task as this the position and temperament of Erasmus were admirably suited. Of humble parentage, and born out of wedlock, he lived the life of a wandering scholar, untrammelled by ties of civic or national patriotism, and owning no allegiance, save to the republic of learning and the Christian Church. He combined the steady glow and devotion of the student with the grace, fluency, and abundance of the man of letters, and the capacity for friendship, which is a mark of the true humanist. His wit was light, animated, and sparkling; his dialectical resources copious and refined; his Latinity conspicuous for ease and nervous eloquence; and in the history of European letters he occupies the unique position of a satirist, a writer of devotional manuals, and a pioneer of linguistic and Biblical research.

Literary men are liable to peculiar failings, and of these Erasmus had his full share. He was sensitive, vain, quick to take offence, and being an impecunious scholar dependent on the favours of the great, he sometimes stooped to flattery and supplication. It was an age in which Ciceronians were prone to imitate the rhetorical flights of their master, and the letters of Erasmus, though nearly always lively, often lack the supreme quality of plain and measured speech. But this spare little Dutch scholar, whose life was a perpetual struggle with ill-health and discomfort, proved to be one of the greatest intellectual forces of his age. Without real originality of thought, without the high gift of exact and consummate scholarship, Erasmus wielded a power far beyond the reach of many stronger and more spacious intellects. This was not merely due to his gifts of witty and satirical expression, though few

men have achieved so wide a fame for their raillery. It was due to the fact that with all his apparent levity, all his keen and mordant criticism of men and manners, all his powers of humorous observation, he was the most earnest and single-minded of men. In his youth he had been incarcerated in a monastery, and the stupidity, the ignorance, the hypocrisy of his associates burnt into his soul. He had felt the dead weight of obscurantism, felt it with such a vivid sense of horror and contempt, that the hatred of the thing as a stain upon the flawless beauty of Christian piety quivers and flashes in all that he writes. He cannot keep it out; it is all-pervasive; it colours his whole view; it enters as an exciting and combustible element into his most gracious moods. Whatever he may produce, a devotional manual like the *Enchiridion Militis Christiani*, an edition of the New Testament in Greek, annotations on St. Jerome, brims over with this urgent polemic against the forces of darkness. CHAP. VI.

Not that he was consumed in mere repulsion. He saw clearly what religion should be, and for that reason felt with greater stringency the coils which throttled her. All that he studied, assimilated, admired, Lucian or Cicero, the evangelists or the early fathers, were made to contribute to one end, the reformation moral, intellectual, and religious of society. He wished to see men study the Gospels rather than Scotus or Aquinas, and to see the Gospels studied in Greek rather than in Latin. Against the accretions of medieval catholicism he offered the simpler ways of the early Church; from the uncontested Vulgate he appealed to the Greek original; to relics, pilgrimages, charms, and incantations, he opposed the ideal of natural piety. That he was so little of an iconoclast, that he was so staunch a churchman, that he was so concerned with the maintenance of ecclesiastical unity, caused him to be regarded as a backslider when the great rift came. He, a creature so full of powerful dissolvents, would have nothing of the old fabric dissolved. Yet there is no cause for surprise in this when we consider the temperament of the man, or the influences by which it had been most powerfully affected. Erasmus came to Oxford at an impressionable age, brought over by Lord Mountjoy, a young English nobleman, whose acquaintance he had made in Paris. At Oxford he fell under the influence of Colet and his friends, and for the first time

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heard the new learning intelligently applied to the service of Christian piety. The impression was ineffaceable and helped to fix the orbit of his creed.[1]

The first stay of Erasmus in England lasted till December, 1499. When he returned five years later to visit Mountjoy, then a privy-councillor and a companion and mentor of the young Prince Henry, he found his little circle of Oxford friends removed to London. Colet had just been appointed to the deanery of St. Paul's and was setting an example to the clergy by the frugality of his household and the excellence of his sermons. Grocyn was rector of St. Lawrence Jewry, Latimer was practising medicine, and young Thomas More, whose acquaintance Erasmus had made upon his previous visit, had risen into public notice as a lawyer, a lecturer, and a politician. In company with William Lily, an Oxford friend who had learnt Greek among the Knights of Rhodes, More had spent the years between 1499 and 1503 in religious meditation, living in the neighbourhood of the Charterhouse; and it seemed possible that the highest and most elastic spirit in England might be caught by the allurements of an ecclesiastical career. In his preparation for the religious life More omitted no precaution which self-chastisement could supply. He scourged himself with rods; he wore a hair shirt; he slept upon bare boards. His exquisite humility would spare him nothing. But no austerities could contract the span of his sympathies or the gracious workings of his buoyant and hospitable nature. He turned epigrams from the Greek Anthology into Latin elegiacs; he prompted Lily to translate a curious Italian treatise upon divination; he wrote an elegy upon the queen; he plunged into the confused and ardent crater of Pico's speculations. In the end he decided for a secular career, sat in a parliament and married. But his earliest serious contribution to literature, the translation of the life of Pico, published in 1510, shows how little the deep currents of his mind had been deflected by an outward change of purpose. In the radiant young Italian humanist who shared with Ficino the chief lustre of the Platonic Academy in Florence, More had divined a spirit congenial

[1] The *Epistles of Erasmus*, transl. F. M. Nichols, i., 224; Seebohm, *Oxford Reformers*, pp. 40, 76, 103 (2nd ed.). Mr. Nichols is inclined to reduce the influence of Colet.

to his own. Pico had rank, beauty, learning, and fame; yet he abandoned the pomps and pleasures of the world to follow in the paths of Savonarola. His humility, his renunciation of self, his pursuit of the essentials and disregard of the accidentals of religion, and above all his emancipation from intellectual pride achieved in the midst of intense and original intellectual endeavour, made him a pattern of Christian scholarship. More's spirit was less passionate and exorbitant, and he asked of life nothing which life cannot give. But the story of Pico's conversion—how he burnt his love-poems and devoted his "angelic wit, his ardent labour, his profound erudition," to the service of God—was so arresting that More was drawn to it by many threads; and his rendering of the beautiful Italian biography takes rank among the most delightful pieces of sixteenth-century English prose. CHAP. VI.

Among the allurements which had drawn Erasmus to England was the promise held out to him by his friends that his talents would be rewarded by "mountains of gold". Mountjoy was high in the royal favour, and Warham, who had become Archbishop of Canterbury in 1504, was known to be a generous patron of letters. To Fox, who had been kind to him on his previous visit, Erasmus presented a translation of Lucian's *Toxaris* with a petition for further favours. Grocyn introduced him to Warham, and the first interview between the scholar and the archbishop has been described in a diverting letter. Erasmus had presented Warham with a translation of the *Hecuba* of Euripides. "I was received by him before dinner with a few words, being myself by no means a talkative or ceremonious person; and again after dinner, as he also was a man of unaffected manners, we had a short conversation together; after which he dismissed me with an honorary present, which he gave me when we were alone together, according to a custom he had, to avoid putting the receiver to shame or creating a jealousy against him. This took place at Lambeth; and while we were returning by boat, as is usual there, Grocyn asked me what present I had received. I replied in jest an immense sum. When he laughed I asked him his reason—whether he thought that the prelate was not generous enough to give so much, or not rich enough to afford it, or that my work was not worthy of a munificent

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present. At last having revealed the amount of the gift I asked him playfully why the archbishop had given so little, and when I pressed the question, he answered that none of the reasons I had suggested was right, but a suspicion had occurred to him that perhaps I had already dedicated the same work to some other person elsewhere." Erasmus revenged himself for the baseless imputation. Passing through Paris on his way to Italy, he gave his editions of *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia in Aulis* to the printer, and dedicated both works to Warham. "At that time," he writes, "I had no intention of going back to England, nor any thought of visiting the archbishop again. Such was my pride when my fortune was so low."

Meanwhile Erasmus was basking in the sunshine of general appreciation. "I am still in London," he writes, on April 1, 1506, "most welcome, as it seems, to the greatest and most learned of the whole country. The King of England has promised me a benefice; but the prince's arrival has caused the matter to be put off." He was profuse in compliments to English scholarship. "There are in London," he writes, "five or six men who are accurate scholars in both tongues such as I think even Italy itself does not at present possess." Of Fox he wrote, hyperbolically, "he has such an affection for men of learning that the sun never saw the like". To Fisher he probably owed the distinction of a Cambridge degree. He made friends with Dr. Ruthall, the king's secretary, and dedicated to him Lucian's *Timon, or the Misanthrope;* and he left England for Italy about the beginning of June, 1506, charged with the care of the two sons of Dr. Baptist Boerio, Henry's Genoese physician.

Judged by the standard of Medicean Florence, the English court was not pre-eminently intellectual or cultured. Hunting and archery, tilting and tennis, the chess board and the dice box were the main diversions of the king and his companions. Laden as he was with affairs of state, Henry was not above enjoying the antics of a tumbler or the pranks of Dego, his Spanish fool. A Scottish piper, "a young damoysell that daunceth," a soothsayer from Cornwall, a Flemish giantess, a Scots boy with a beard, a Welsh rhymer, would serve to make the hour pass and send the king's hand into his pocket for a few shillings. There were cock-fights at shrove-tide, bonfires on midsummer eve, and waits and disguisings at Christmas.

Strolling players would always find a welcome, and nothing was deemed more diverting than wrestling and bull-baiting. For music the king appears to have cherished a genuine taste, welcoming singers, however humble, to his court, and spending freely upon flutes and clavichords, harps, and organs, as well as upon the children of the royal chapel. In these musical tastes Henry was not peculiar. The Lady Margaret had her band of minstrels, and so too had my Lord of York, and my Lord Prince, and my Lord of Suffolk, and doubtless many another lord beside. Some measure of the monetary value attached to musical services may be derived from the accounts of the privy purse. Thirty pounds was paid for a pair of organs; a pound for a new song, and thirteen shillings and fourpence for the tuning of two clavichords. CHAP. VI.

But if the old rough flavour of medieval jollity survived, it was attempered by the influences of a newer and politer age. The king bought Italian furniture, kept an Italian chaplain, corresponded with Italian courts and admitted the Duke of Urbino, the mirror of Italian courtesy, to the Order of the Garter. A few pounds from the privy purse went to the printer, the book vendor, the copyist, the illuminator; a few scholars were helped to the university; a few presents were made to men of letters, such as to the official poets attached to the households of the king's mother and the heir-apparent, or to Bernard André, the blind poet of Toulouse, who has left a history of the reign, or to the "rhymer of Scotland," who was probably none other than the famous poet Dunbar.

When the king visited Cambridge in 1505 he listened to the disputations of all the faculties, made a public entertainment for the scholars, and promoted the completion of King's College chapel. In 1506, passing through the town on his way to Walsingham, he presented the university with 100 marks and contributed £40 towards the repair of St. Mary's the Great. Nor did this exhaust the measure of liberality which was extended by the royal family to Cambridge. As long ago as 1497 Fisher had been appointed confessor to the king's mother, and Fisher was the head of a Cambridge college and the inspiring force in the university. The Lady Margaret, whose monument is the most exquisite treasure of Westminster abbey, was a devout and learned lady, the patroness of Caxton,

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and herself the author of a translation from a French devotional manual. The current of her interest and some portion of her ample means was turned towards the universities by the influence of Fisher. In 1503 she founded a chair of divinity both at Oxford and Cambridge, and the two foundations of Christ's and St. John's in the latter university owe their being to her munificence. The statutes of Christ's are remarkable for the fact that, while providing for instruction in the orators and the poets, they ignore some features of the medieval discipline, and this new departure may doubtless be attributed to the wise counsels of Fisher, and perhaps to the indirect influence of Erasmus. A new era was now opening for Cambridge. In 1506, what with the sweating sickness, which had carried off no less than ten doctors, and town-and-gown riots, and a dearth of literary patrons, a disgust for good letters seems to have pervaded the colleges. A few years later Cambridge was in the van of English learning. The dull autocrats of scholasticism were dethroned; the air was lively with new ideas and the study of humane letters was pursued with a zeal which Oxford should have envied. Yet though the colleges had received their full share of royal favours, and Henry had left no less a sum than £5,000 towards the completion of King's College chapel, the university still occasionally found itself in a humiliating state of indigence. In 1513 it actually applied to Lord Mountjoy to assist towards the stipend of the Greek chair.

One considerable literary production owes its being to Henry's suggestion, the *Historia Anglicana* of Polydore Vergil. The author was born at Urbino in 1470, and after serving for a time as a papal chamberlain in the court of Alexander VI. came to England in 1501 as subcollector of Peter's pence. His name was already well known. In 1496 he had published a little volume of proverbs gathered from Latin authors, which, though subsequently eclipsed by the *Adagia* of Erasmus, at once obtained a wide popularity. It was in itself an achievement to have struck so novel and so rich a vein. The *Proverbiorum Libellus* represented in a concentrated form the wit and wisdom of the ages; it was a manual of philosophy divested of pedantry, a brief compendium of amusement and instruction; and it contained the qualities of the novel and the

short story combined with the quintessential extract of history and of popular life. It was learned and lively, shrewd and witty; above all it was short, and to a generation fed upon folios it came as a delicious alleviation. CHAP. VI.

In the next year Polydore added to his reputation by the publication of three books on the inventors of things, *De Inventoribus rerum.* Here again the theme was new and the success decisive. Society was living in a certain state of civilisation, highly complex and various; it possessed creeds and churches, customs and rites, arts and sciences and various mechanical appliances for the satisfaction of human wants. In comparatively recent times gunpowder and printing had revolutionised the conditions of war and of knowledge, while sudden and long strides had been made in other departments of human effort, notably in the fine arts. Why should not a book be written to portray the origin of all these things, the sum of which made up civilisation? In the hands of a philosopher the theme would have proved fruitful, but for a penurious renaissance scholar in a hurry the complexity of social progress was a thing far too recondite to be realised. Polydore ascribes the fabric of civilisation to inventors whose works could be isolated and stated with clearness, after a perfunctory raid upon the classics. Lycurgus and Gyges, Homer and Xerxes, the dim gigantic figures who taught the Greeks of old to govern or to dream, to paint or to carve, reappear in their conventional poses. A chapter on sculpture could omit Michael Angelo; a chapter on painting could ignore the Tuscans. Save for a few scattered outbursts of personal feeling, a eulogy of Raphael his fellow townsman, a denunciation of gunpowder as destructive of chivalry, a tribute to two learned uncles, Polydore contents himself with shepherding the tame cattle driven from the fold of Pliny. The book is the work of a novice, but it hit the popular taste, and the subcollector landed in England a marked man.

The men of the south do not always thrive in England, but Polydore was an exception. He became archdeacon of Wells, he acquired an entrance into the best literary circles in London, and he addressed himself to writing a great history of England. Though he was far from being a genius, he was cultured, observant, and curious, full of industry, and thoroughly

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interested in the world around him. As an outsider and a cosmopolitan, he could afford to be impartial; as an Italian, he was acquainted with higher critical standards than those prevalent in the *scriptoria* of English monasteries. Having already given some attention to civilisation in general, he brought to his task a wide horizon. Constitutional history did not exist for him, nor would it have interested his readers; and indeed in the reigns of the first two Tudors there can have been little of the old constitutional edifice clearly visible to the eye of a foreigner. The exigencies of classic taste demanded the use of the word *concilium*, where native writers would have written *parliamentum*, and with the loss of the word parliament, the history of England appears to be not wholly English. On the other hand, he was attracted by physical and social features.

His history begins with an interesting account of the geography and the climate, the fauna, and the outward aspect of England. We see the stone bridge of London with its row of shops on either side; the pleasant valleys studded with the sheltered country houses of the nobility; the parks filled with game; the small boys driving the rooks from the crops with bows and arrows; the long stretches of luscious pasture; the herons breeding in the rookeries when the young rooks are abroad; the hardy folk among the Welsh mountains who speak in gutturals and live upon oaten cakes. He notices the white fleecy sheep, the apple orchards and the oak woods with their wealth of acorns, the ploughs drawn by mixed teams of oxen and horses, the big hens in Kent, the fat pheasants and partridges, quails and larks, which load the table in almost every household during the winter season. The great opulence of the country seems to have made a deep impression on this intelligent observer. In most English houses, he says, however poor, you are sure to find silver salt-cellars, silver spoons, and silver cups. As for the population, it was carnivorous in diet, slow and deliberate in counsel, gentle and hospitable in entertainment, intrepid in war; moreover, a most Christian and religious people. "In habit of body and manners they hardly differ from Italians."

The *Historia Anglicana* is a very long book, and it took a long time to write. Indeed it was not published until 1534,

twenty-seven years after Polydore first addressed himself to the task. In scope and conception it marks a new departure in English historical writing. Polydore not only tells the story of England from the earliest times to the date of publication, but so much also of the story of Normandy, Scotland, and Ireland as appears to him to bear upon the central stream of events. No previous writer had ever attempted a history of England upon so large a scale or in so modern a spirit. "The law given to the historian," he writes, "is that he dare not say anything which is false, that he suppress not anything which is true, that there be no suspicion of favour or spite." Polydore at any rate professes impartiality. He confronts French and English authorities; he uses Saxo Grammaticus and Norman chronicles; that he may understand Scotland, he obtains from his friend, Bishop Gawin Douglas, a real authority—the Annals of John Major. One discovery does peculiar credit to his critical acumen. During some preliminary researches he had the good fortune to come upon two manuscripts of Gildas' *De Excidio Britanniæ*, and was struck by the author's statement that all the documents relating to the Roman period of English history had been burnt or carried abroad by British exiles. If this were really true, and if the Britons were, as Gildas represented, neither strong in war nor faithful in peace, what became of Brute and Locrine, Arthur and Alba, Rudubras and Lear, and all the other British heroes who flourish so bravely in the pages of Geoffrey of Monmouth? Polydore came to the conclusion that all these stories were ridiculous figments, concocted to expiate the faults of the Britons. His discovery involved him in some obloquy, as if a meddlesome foreigner had any business to delete whole story books of delightful British heroes. A Latin epigram spoke of Vergil the poet and Vergil the liar; and an elaborate calumny was invented to the effect that the foreign rascal had ransacked all the English libraries and then burnt the manuscripts to secure for his book a monopoly of historical information.

An archdeacon does not approach the problems of ecclesiastical history with complete detachment, and Polydore's history would pass the strictest tests of catholic orthodoxy. For him Wycliffe is a man desirous of harm, who knowing that he cannot infect learned men with his poison, deliberately sets

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himself to ensnare the ignorant commons, and Lollardy an evil superstition, so powerful that even in the writer's day men were burnt from time to time together with the English tracts of their misguided master. On the other hand, Polydore was no obscurantist. He shares indeed, though an enthusiast for Hebrew literature, the general detestation of Jews, but in all matters of Church organisation he is for conservative reform. Like his friend Erasmus, he condemns the vulgar miracle-mongering friars, the non-residence of canons, the plurality of benefices, the degeneration of the sermon, the abuses of benefit of clergy, and all the extravagances of popular catholicism. Indeed he goes so far as to speak of the "incredible degradation" of monasticism and to sigh for a general council to reform the Church. A complete dearth of imagination combined with a plain and heavy style disqualifies Polydore from taking rank as an artistic historian. But the man who edited Gildas, who rediscovered the laws of Alfred, who exposed the legend of Brute, who told the truth about Joan of Arc and uttered a protest against the intrusion of national animosities into historical writing, has done something to redeem the long stretches of dull hackwork which depress the reader of his English history.

We should be much mistaken if we pictured to ourselves the nobility of this period as interested in letters or the cultivation of the mind. An Italian who knew the English aristocracy well and desired to pay a compliment to a lettered noble, described him as furnishing a unique example of culture in a class devoted to dicing and the card-table. It is true that a few young gentlemen passed on from the English universities to Paris to receive some finishing touches to an imperfect education. But with the single exception of Lord Mountjoy, the friend and helper of Erasmus, no English nobleman is recorded during this reign to have assisted a struggling author, to have contributed endowments to an educational foundation, or to have published a line either in prose or verse. In these circumstances the hopes of the impecunious scribbler, unprovided with a college fellowship, were centred in the favours of the court or the Church. To receive a pension or a benefice, to be retained as a household poet, a tutor, a groom of the chamber, or a secretary, were the more substantial rewards of

the literary profession; but a hand-to-mouth subsistence might be earned by a ballad, a dedication, or an interlude, by a copy of fawning Latin verses, or a ponderous piece of English moralising after the fashion of Lydgate. The vices and discomforts of court life had furnished a classic theme for the satirist ever since the publication of the *Miseriæ Curialium* of Æneas Sylvius, and Alexander Barclay, a Scottish monk who had entered a Benedictine house in Devonshire, wrote a racy eclogue in dispraise of courtiers, and in his *Ship of Fools*, published in 1509, exhibited many courtly follies to ridicule. To a circle of west-country squires and yeomen it must have been gratifying to learn that the courtier generally went without dinner or sleep, and that he had every reason to envy the poor moorland shepherd who braved the buffets of the weather on a frugal diet of milk and fruit, brown bread and cheese. Barclay's picture is painted for edification, and must be interpreted with reserve. But at least it will be admitted that the conditions of court life are unfavourable to the production of valuable literature. Of all the poetry put out by the frequenters of the king's circle, one couplet alone deserved to be printed. In a tedious and conventional work, *The Pastime of Pleasure*, Stephen Hawes, a groom of the privy chamber, lighted at last upon a gracious thought—

> For though a day is never so longe
> At last the belles ringeth to evensonge.

It was the "evensonge" of medieval English poetry, as indeed of all other forms of medieval life, which was now sounding. The next reign was destined to listen to new measures.

The heir to the throne was a product of the new age. He grew up in the atmosphere of the renaissance. He was given the best instructors, and was encouraged by his father to pursue his studies with assiduity. Bernard André, historian and poet, probably had some share in his tuition. The French language was imparted to him by Giles d'Ewes, author of a famous French grammar, while Skelton, the poet laureate, that "light and ornament of English letters," as Erasmus styles him, claims to have taught the boy to read.

> The honor of England I learned to spell,
> I gave him drink of the sugred well
> Of Helicon's waters crystalline
> Acquainting him with the Muses nine.

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At a later date the accomplished Mountjoy was made the companion of his studies, and while the two youths paid special attention to history, Henry became acquainted by his friend with the writings of Erasmus. In 1499 the young prince made the acquaintance of the great humanist himself. "I was staying," writes Erasmus, "at Lord Mountjoy's country house when Thomas More came to see me, and took me out with him for a walk as far as the next village, where all the king's children, except Prince Arthur, who was then the eldest son, were being educated. When we came into the hall, the attendants not only of the palace but also of Mountjoy's household were all assembled. In the midst stood Prince Henry now nine years old, and having already something of royalty in his demeanour, in which there was a certain dignity combined with singular courtesy. On his right was Margaret about eleven years of age, afterwards married to James, King of Scots; and on his left played Mary, a child of four. Edmund was an infant in arms. More, with his companion Arnold, after paying his respects to the boy Henry, the same that now is King of England, presented him with some writing. For my part, not having expected anything of the sort, I had nothing to offer, but promised that on another occasion I would in some way declare my duty towards him. Meantime I was angry with More for not having warned me, especially as the boy sent me a little note, while we were at dinner, to challenge something from my pen. I went home, and in the Muses' spite from whom I had been so long divorced, finished the poem within three days."[1]

The boy soon evinced remarkable endowments both of mind and body. He became proficient in Latin; he spoke French with ease; he could understand Italian; he applied an energetic intellect to the problems of philosophy and theology; he shared his father's passion for music, and made himself expert on the lute, the organ, and the harpsichord. He was a capital shot with a bow and arrow, an enthusiastic tennis player, a brilliant figure in the tilting yard. "O my Erasmus," wrote Mountjoy, in 1509, "if you could see how the world here is rejoicing in the possession of so great a prince, how his life is all their desire, you could not contain your cheers for joy.

[1] The *Epistles of Erasmus*, transl. Nichols, i., 201 f.

Avarice is expelled the country; liberality scatters riches with bounteous hand. Our king does not desire gold nor gems, but virtue, glory, immortality. I will give you an example. The other day he wished he was more learned than he is. I said, 'That is not what we expect of your Grace, but that you should foster and encourage learned men'. 'Yea, surely,' said he, 'for indeed without them we should scarcely exist at all.' What more splendid saying could fall from the lips of a prince?" It was in this mood that England saluted the accession of her young Octavius.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PALADIN OF THE CHURCH.

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SELDOM had a new reign opened more prosperously. Every one admired the king. He was a thorough Englishman, bluff and rosy, strong and limber, fond of field-sports and yachting, a tennis player and a swordsman. He "shot as strong and as great a length as any of his guard"; he was a judge of a horse; he could wrestle and throw the bar. "He is very rich," wrote an enthusiast, "and very liberal, so humane and kind that the poorest person can easily approach him, and so made for war, that there is no military exercise in which he does not equal, not to say surpass his soldiers." And with all these robust English qualities he possessed aptitudes of a rarer and more delicate kind. He played, according to the report of the Venetian ambassadors, "on almost every instrument". He composed two masses; his name is set to some swinging and jolly ballads.[1] One thing was certain from the first, that he intended to taste the sweets of life and to have his own way. But though he would go a maying with his merry friends, or disguise himself as Robin Hood, or challenge all comers to twelve strokes with the two-handed sword, he never forgot that he was king. His pride, his sense of power, his contempt for the foreigner, were qualities innate in his being, and strengthened by all the circumstances of his life. A French ambassador once ventured to admire his shooting. "It is good

[1] Henry's gifts are extolled in *Cal. State Papers, Venice*, ii., 614, 624, 1287. A volume of songs and ballads, many of which are ascribed to the king, exists in the British Museum, Add. MS. 31922, and has been described in the *Archæologia*, xli., 371-86. It remains uncertain whether Henry wrote the ballads ascribed to him, or merely provided the musical settings. The words of Holinshed (*Chronicle*, iii., 557) would imply that he did both, and evidence pointing in the same direction may be found in *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.*, iii., 1188, x., 908.

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for a Frenchman," answered the boy—he was then sixteen—with cool insolence.[1] A few months after his accession, in September, 1509, another envoy came from Paris, acknowledging the receipt by his master of a letter in which Henry asked for friendship and peace with France. "Who wrote that letter?" said the king fiercely; "I ask peace of the King of France, who dare not look me in the face, still less make war on me!"[2] And with that he rose and declined to hear anything further.

It had been one of the last injunctions of the old king that his son should complete the marriage with Princess Catharine; and though it is reported that Archbishop Warham had scruples about the match, the behest was obeyed June 3, 1509, and Warham himself performed the marriage ceremony. The princess was lively and agreeable; the wedding afforded a congenial opportunity for pomp and splendour, and England's alliance with the house of Castile plunged her speedily into the vortex of European politics. The new Queen of England was a devoted daughter, and used her influence with the young king to promote the interests of her astute and watchful parent. "These kingdoms of your highness," she wrote to Ferdinand soon after her marriage, "are in great tranquillity;"[3] and she proceeded to represent that Henry was entirely submitted to her guidance.

The Lady Margaret lived long enough to dictate the choice of her grandson's earliest councillors; and the experienced band of diplomatists, lawyers, and soldiers, who had served the father, continued for a while to direct the counsels of the son. The great seal still remained with the Archbishop of Canterbury, but Warham seems to have taken little or no share in the shaping of national policy. Unambitious, and perhaps a little weary of twenty years of official life, he was content to devote himself to his clerical duties, and to dispense a generous patronage to impecunious authors. With the effacement of Warham, the chief place in the direction of affairs belonged to Richard Fox, the lord privy seal. Wary, alert, resourceful,

[1] Gachard, *Collection des Voyages des Souverains des Pays Bas*, i., 426.

[2] *Cal. State Papers, Venice*, ii., 11.

[3] *Cal. State Papers, Spain*, ii., 12, 21; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, i., 368.

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quick to descry the currents of the age, Fox had been concerned in almost all the great transactions of the preceding reign. He had been the chief English envoy employed in drafting the treaty of Etaples; he was instrumental in the preparation of the Great Intercourse; he negotiated the Scottish and the Spanish marriages, and brought to a successful conclusion the alliance with the Archduke Charles. In return for these services Henry VII. had named him as one of his executors, and if Harpsfield may be believed, had specially commended the heir-apparent to his charge. Fox's conduct had not been entirely free from blemish, and Sir Thomas More told Erasmus that he was the real author of the famous dilemma which now goes by the name of Morton's fork. But he was a devoted and able servant of the crown, and deservedly obtained the chief place in the king's council. Such was his influence, that in 1510 Badoer, the Venetian ambassador, described him as "alter rex".[1]

The only serious rival to the lord privy seal was, if we except the queen, Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey and lord treasurer, and a contest appears to have arisen between the two men on the question of national economy, in which Fox championed the unpopular cause of thrift. Surrey was now sixty-six years of age. He had fought for Edward IV. at Barnet and for Richard III. at Bosworth, and had expiated his loyalty to the White Rose by three years' imprisonment in the Tower. Here he reflected that it was wiser to bow to the risen sun than to chase the unsubstantial shadow of a hopeless loyalty. He was released from prison; his earldom was restored to him; and he repaid the confidence of the king by signal military and diplomatic services. At the accession of Henry VIII. he ranked as the first soldier in England. But though less eminent in political aptitude, and vanquished in the contest for supremacy by Fox, Thomas Howard was no *fro[illegible]deur*, and from him and his house this country was destined to receive loyal and brilliant service both by sea and by land. The other members of the council were less conspicuous. Ruthall, Bishop of Durham, was a hard-working official; Poynings, the controller of the household, had made a name be[illegible]

[1] *Cal. State Papers, Venice*, ii., 64.

as a soldier and administrator, while Sir Thomas Lovell, treasurer of the household, had been chancellor of the exchequer ever since 1485. George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, the lord steward, had fought at Stoke, and contributed an illustrious family reputation to the prestige of the government. Charles Somerset, Lord Herbert, and afterwards Earl of Worcester, the lord chamberlain, was a bastard son of Henry Beaufort, third Duke of Somerset, and had been brought up as a child in the court of Henry VII. He had seen something of war both by land and sea, but his rapid promotion appears to have been due rather to favour than to merit, and his weight was inconsiderable in the councils of the nation. CHAP. VII.

One of the first acts of the new reign was to offer reparation for the extortions practised by the fiscal commissioners. On April 25, 1509, a proclamation was issued to the effect that any one who had sustained injury or suffered loss of goods by the commissioners was to make supplication to the king. The floodgates once opened, the pent-up tide of popular indignation flowed out with such vehemence that the council was compelled to commit Empson and Dudley to prison. There were petitions, there were ballads, there was a cry for blood. Empson, summoned before the council, pleaded that he had only followed out the late king's instructions, and that so long as laws were suffered to exist in the statute-book, fines ought to be exacted for their infringement. What could the council do? They had connived at these malpractices; Lovell at least had largely profited by them; and how could the law condemn men whose chief offence had been the over-zealous enforcement of it? On the other hand, it was necessary to procure popularity for the new reign, and to quiet the public clamour. A way was found out of the difficulty. A charge was trumped up against the two men that on the death of the late king they had summoned their retainers to London with a view to obtaining the control of the government, even if it should involve the destruction of the new king. That they had summoned their retainers to London is likely enough, seeing that they might reasonably expect to have to face the anger of their enemies; but a sensible man does not dream of overturning a dynasty with a handful of knights, yeomen, and farm-servants, and the motive alleged in the indictment was too

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ridiculous to stand a moment's examination. Nevertheless they were condemned, Empson at the Northampton assizes, Dudley before a special commission sitting at the Guildhall and composed of most of the political and legal luminaries of England; and the king allowed them to suffer death upon the scaffold. The first parliament of the reign deemed the evidence sufficient to justify an act of attainder; and if all this was judicial murder, the whole nation was an accomplice. The execution of the "fiscal judges" was regarded as the happiest of omens. Noblemen and merchants, abbots and squires breathed again. The records of the time are full of their cancelled debts.

The first intelligence which came from abroad was thrillingly unpleasant. On May 14 the French won a great victory over the Venetians at Agnadello. "In one day," wrote Machiavelli, "the Venetians lost all that they had acquired during eight hundred years of strenuous effort."[1] The French made themselves masters of North Italy to the Mincio; the papal forces overran the Romagna; the imperial army mastered Friuli and Verona; Vicenza and Padua submitted to the league without a blow. It was one of those cases in which a military reverse, in itself by no means irremediable, causes a disastrous panic in the vanquished party. In despair the republic appealed to England for help, and Henry was strongly inclined to give a favourable answer to their appeal. He told Badoer that he was the signory's good friend and would hold a parliament of his barons to consider the matter. He evinced great regret and distress at the French victory. The atrocities committed by the French troops in Venetia—how they hunted men through the maize fields with bloodhounds, and spared neither age nor sex—were served up for English consumption. It was represented that unless something were promptly done, Louis XII. would make himself "lord of Italy and monarch of the world".

So far as diplomacy could go, Henry was willing to do his utmost to relieve the pressure upon Venice. He wrote to Louis; he wrote to the Archduchess Margaret to influence her father; in November he sent Christopher Bainbridge, archbishop of York, to Rome in order to promote the Venetian

[1] *Discorsi*, iii., 31.

interest at the curia. Bainbridge, who was the bearer of letters both to the pope and to Ferdinand in favour of Venice, told the Venetian ambassadors that the King of England was all for the signory, and that he would attack France. The London rumour in December was that when parliament met at the beginning of the new year, it would vote supplies for a French war.

Nearly six years had elapsed since a parliament had met at Westminster, an interlude full of sharp and disagreeable lessons to the country. Yet, however bitter had been the experience of irregular exactions, continuous parliamentary government was neither expected nor desired. The members of the lower house were still paid by their constituencies, and the parliamentary wage was felt to be still a burden.[1] To attend a parliament was regarded as a duty not less irksome and hardly more honourable than service upon a jury, and by special favour of the king gentlemen would now and again obtain exemption from the liability to be returned to the house of commons. Once the novelty of the session had worn off, the squires and burgesses found the business unutterably tedious, and a statute had to be passed in 1514 to prevent members from going home to their pleasure or their business before the work of parliament was completed. In a short session of some forty to sixty days it was impossible for the country member to acquire an adequate command of affairs, and affairs would therefore be likely to find him listless, incurious, and obedient to superior guidance. It would seem that the majority of the bills discussed in parliament were first introduced in the lords, and it is probable that most of them had previously been prepared by members of the privy council in consultation with the law officers of the crown or the king's serjeants-at-law. To one of these legal experts a bill was usually submitted if it was deemed to require amendment, and occasionally a committee of the lords would be deputed to hold a conference with the commons upon some point as to which the two houses were disagreed. If a pending measure happened to arouse opposition outside parliament, the representatives of the threatened interest might be summoned to either house to plead their cause and, if the

[1] *Hist. MSS. Commission Reports*, ix., pt. 2, p. 152; xi., pt. 3, pp. 117, 177, 180; xiii., pt. 4, p. 306; xiv., pt. 8, pp. 30, 252, 254; xv., pt. 10, p. 33.

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justice of the case seemed to be intricate, the bill might be committed to two or more selected lawyers for amendment. The spirit of legality, of careful adherence to traditional forms, pervaded all the proceedings.

The first parliament of the reign assembled on January 21, 1510, and contrary to expectation no warlike proposals were submitted to it. In his opening sermon Warham expatiated on the necessity of good laws, and spoke of parliament as the "political stomach of the kingdom". The judges were the eyes of the state; the lawyers were the tongues; the sheriffs the messengers; the escheators the explorers. A bad sheriff was a raven, a good escheator was a rarity, and then in a much applauded peroration the chancellor turned to the estates, summoned, he said, to "repeal such laws as were bad, to temper such as were rigorous, and to issue such as were useful". The old constitutional theory had successfully weathered the civil wars, and was all the tougher for the six years during which Empson and Dudley had wrought their will. The first business of parliament was to protect the kingdom against a renewal of the peculiar fiscal oppressions which had marked the concluding years of the late reign. The commons adopted a bill that all actions on penal statutes should be commenced within a year of the offence. The lords, after some debate, proposed that the period should be extended to four years in cases where the king was plaintiff, and the commons so far acceded as to accept a three years' term for the crown. The attention of parliament was also directed to the extortion and dishonesty of escheators. In future they must be men of substance; they must sit in public and hear evidence; and their conclusions must be found by a jury of 40s. freeholders in the county where the inquiry was held. As Empson and Dudley had claimed many lands as holden of the king, which were not so holden in reality, an act was passed to enable such "untrue inquisitions" to be traversed. The aristocracy of England was still wincing under the humiliations which it had endured; but the wheel had now swung round full circle.

The next duty of parliament was to cope with the ever-menacing problem of poverty and crime. It was deemed advisable to continue the prohibition of the export of bullion and coin. Since the wearing of costly apparel was regarded

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both as a cause of poverty and an occasion of crime, the habiliments of the nation were graduated by statute. No man under the rank of duke should wear any cloth of gold or tissue; nor under the rank of earl should wear sables; but the king might wear what he pleased and might licence the wearing of any apparel. The desire to protect home industries entered as an element into this curious piece of legislation, and all persons under the degree of a lord or a knight of the garter were debarred from wearing any woollen cloth made out of the realm.

Since the nation was resolved to have no more Empsons and Dudleys, recourse was had to parliament for supplies. Tunnage and poundage and a subsidy on the export of wool, wool-fells, and leather were granted to the king for life, with the usual proviso that the said subsidies should be employed for the safeguard of the sea and the defence of the realm. A sum of £19,394 16s. 3d. was assigned for the expenses of the royal household, and another sum of £2,015 19s. 11d. was allotted to the king's great wardrobe. On February 23 parliament was dissolved, having transacted business on twenty-nine days.

There was no sound reason of policy why England should embroil herself in the affairs of the continent. Many domestic problems of the highest importance pressed for anxious consideration, pauperism, the agrarian question, the regulation of trade and industry, the reform of the Church, the improvement of national education, the extension of English influence in Ireland, the elimination of gross scandal and inequality from the administration of justice. To attempt to recover the lost dominions in France was as wise as to plough the sand or to sow the sea. The verdict given threescore years before was irreversible. The French possessions had been won when France was riven in twain by rival factions, when her king was mad, her queen treacherous, her military system absurd, when England had the alliance of Burgundy, the friendship or neutrality of Brittany, and when the long-bow was supreme. All these peculiar circumstances had now long disappeared, and every year which passed by made a new dismemberment of France more and more improbable. At the same time fresh and profitable enterprises were opening out in other directions. Spain had already won an empire beyond the waves of the Atlantic, and the sword of Albuquerque was carving out for

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Portugal a kingdom in India. It is reported by Lord Herbert of Cherbury—who may, however, have been influenced by the conceptions of a later age—that when the question of peace or war with France came before the king's council there were advocates of peace who used the following remarkable words: "Let us in God's name leave off our attempts against *terra firma*. The natural situation of islands seems not to comport with conquests in that kind. England alone is a just empire, or when we enlarge ourselves, let it be in that way we can and to which it seems the eternal providence hath destined us which is by sea."[1]

Henry was fond enough of the sea, but he was young, ambitious, and anxious to check the growing power of France. It could be argued with some show of reason that the more deeply Louis XII. plunged his country into the quicksands of Italian politics, the less easily would he be able to thwart the projects of England. It was almost a mathematical certainty that a war with France would precipitate a collision with Scotland, and wreck the greatest diplomatic achievement of the previous reign. Yet a war with France would be popular with the English nobility, and to such a war the king's mind was surely tending. In the autumn of 1509 he sounded his father-in-law as to martial possibilities, but learnt that the time was not yet ripe. To the consternation of Venice, the peace between England and France was solemnly renewed in the summer of 1510. But though the outward relations between London and Paris remained cordial, Henry was sincere when he told the Venetians that he wished them well, and there was significance in Fox's remark, that while the French king was old, the signory was immortal, and that something would be done for it in another year.[2] Meanwhile, if France was not to be an open enemy, it was best that she should be an acknowledged friend. Among other advantages to be obtained from the alliance were French pensions for English councillors, and a tribute to the king due in respect of the treaty of Etaples.

[1] The speeches in Lord Herbert's *History* are for the most part literary exercises, as is shown by an inspection of the erasures and corrections in the original manuscript, Jesus College, Oxford, MS. lxiv.; see *Engl. Hist. Rev.*, xx. (1905), 498. That a party in the council opposed the war is attested by Vergil, *Hist.*, lib. xxvii., 623.

[2] *Cal. State Papers, Venice*, ii., 64.

Two instalments of this annuity were paid over at Calais in May and November, 1511. CHAP. VII.

Meanwhile the complexion of affairs upon the continent underwent a startling change. The very success of the league of Cambray proved the signal for its dissolution. Julius II. had called the Germans and French into Italy to crush Venice, and he was now prepared to call upon Venice to help him to expel the foreigner from Italy. His motives were a curious compound of the noble and the petty. He was a Genoese, and the French had subjugated Genoa and banished his kinsmen the Fregosi; he was an Italian, and a French Milan was a reproach to Italian pride; he wished to annex the territories of the Duke of Ferrara to the papal state, partly because the duke was the son-in-law of his late enemy Alexander VI., partly because he was an ally of France, and partly because he was a serious rival in the salt trade. On February 24, 1510, the Venetians were absolved from the censures of the Church at the price of a complete acknowledgment of the pope's ecclesiastical authority. On July 3 Ferdinand was won over by the grant of the investiture of Naples. The famous mercenaries of Switzerland changed their allegiance for a higher rate of pay, and were now prepared to fight the papal battle. To conquer Ferrara, to revolutionise Genoa, to drive the French from Milan, to help the Venetians in their struggle against the imperialists, such were the aims of the fiery and dauntless pontiff, to whose energy may principally be attributed the foundation of the Papal States. In this struggle Julius counted upon the assistance of England. In April, 1510, he sent a golden rose to the young king, and by a delicate piece of diplomacy the removal of the excommunication from Venice was effected two days after the receipt of an appeal from Henry on her behalf.

The quarrel between the pope and the King of France did not merely concern Italy, though the existence of the papal state was bound up in its issue. Julius had used spiritual weapons against Ferrara, and Louis, after some indecision, resolved to use spiritual weapons against the pope. A council of French prelates met at Tours and decided that in certain circumstances a prince might invade the Papal States, withdraw himself from the papal obedience, and defend an ally whose temporal possessions were menaced by the pope. The old

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spirit of the Gallican Church was invoked by the crown, and responded to the appeal. It rained Gallican pamphlets and pasquinades. Pierre Gringoire, the Aristophanes of Normandy, satirised Julius as a wine-bibber. *Perdam Babylonis nomen* was inscribed upon a coin. The ferment reached Germany. Maximilian, whose heat against the papacy was even greater than that of Louis, spoke of introducing the pragmatic sanction, and discussed in his flighty way the desirability of establishing a perpetual legate upon whom ecclesiastical cases might in the last instance be devolved.

Eight malcontent cardinals, four of whom subsequently repented of their audacity, were prepared to give effect to the decision of Louis to summon a general council. Aided by the support of the French and imperial commissioners, they issued from Milan on May 16, 1511, a summons to a general council to meet at Pisa. They maintained that the pope had broken his oath in conclave; that the fathers of Constance had decreed that councils should be frequently summoned and that the cardinals had the right of convening these assemblies. The proctors of Louis and Maximilian signed the document. At this crisis, with the French arms again in the ascendant in Italy and with the menace of schism hanging over Christendom, Julius acted with promptitude and resource. He excommunicated the seceding cardinals; he summoned an œcumenical council to meet in Rome; he framed a coalition against his enemies. On October 5, a league was formed between Aragon, Venice, and the Pope, ostensibly to defend the unity of the Church, to recover Bologna and Ferrara for the papal state, and to restore to Venice her lost possessions in Northern Italy. But wider designs were latent in the arrangement. The pope intended to free Italy from the foreigner; and Ferdinand joined the league in order that he might conquer Navarre. In his interest a special proviso was inserted that if any conquests should be made outside Italy by a member of the league, the conqueror should be confirmed in his possession of them by the pope.

Henry had no direct interest either in Italy or in Navarre, and it was nothing to England that a papal legate should rule in Bologna. The French alliance, on the other hand, possessed obvious points of advantage: it secured peace in the Channel; it bridled the restive chivalry of Scotland; it was productive

of a tangible pecuniary tribute. But from the first Henry had been jealous of the French victories, and the recent turn of events made the case against France clearer and more cogent. She favoured a schismatic council; she had stirred a dangerous debate; she was impeding a crusade, and that at a moment when the Turk seemed vulnerable in every quarter; her ally Scotland was building warships and purchasing artillery. The young theologian was on his mettle. When he learnt that Maximilian contemplated sending envoys to Pisa, he read the emperor a solemn lecture upon the respect due to papal authority. On November 17, the die was cast. A treaty was signed with Aragon pledging this country to go to war with France in the following April. CHAP. VII.

More than half a century had passed since England had been seriously engaged in a great foreign war, and there was some reason to doubt the manner in which she would acquit herself against the famous French artillery and regular horse. In the interval which had elapsed since the close of the hundred years' war a great transformation had come over the military art. The bow was still useful but no longer supreme, and field artillery was now an essential and often a decisive factor in an engagement. The harquebus was not yet sufficiently perfected to be very dangerous, but was a useful element in combination with other arms; and in the composition of an "ensign" or company of German landsknechts the ordinary proportion was eighteen harquebusiers to 100 halberdiers and 282 pikemen. While the famous Swiss infantry had exhibited the value of the pike and of the close formation and solid momentum which were associated with its use, the Venetian war had brought into prominence the value of the Stradiots or light Albanian cavalry. They would swim their horses across deep streams, ride across difficult mountains, and in the hope of plunder were prepared to face solitary perils. So high stood their reputation that an Albanian corps was enticed into the French service, where it formed a useful complement to the heavily armed *gendarmerie*. Meanwhile England had made no advance in the military art. The spear still remained the cavalry weapon; the foot were still armed with bills and bows. It would seem, too, that the best equipment, both military and naval, was to be obtained from sources outside England. When war was in the air Eng-

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lish and Scottish agents were busily buying artillery cast in the famous Flemish or German foundries. Brass cannon were not cast in England till 1521. The strongest anchors came from Biscay; the stoutest masts from Norway; the keenest blades from Bilbao. Milan was incomparable for armour. Almain rivets were best had from Florence; for heavy guns there was no draught horse like the Flanders mare. Even bowstaves were imported from Italy.

The difficult task of organising the equipment, the commissariat, and the mobilisation of the English army mainly fell upon the shoulders of a new man, by name Thomas Wolsey, who held the post of king's almoner and entered the council in 1511. Born at Ipswich in 1471 of well-to-do parents—his father was probably a grazier or a wool-merchant—Wolsey was from an early age destined for the Church. At eleven he was an undergraduate at Oxford; at fifteen he was bachelor of arts; in due time he became a fellow and bursar of Magdalen college, and master of the grammar school attached to that foundation. Had his inclinations been literary or theological, he would have been able to gratify them either as the fellow of an Oxford college, or in the rectory of Limington, Somerset, to which at the age of twenty-nine he was presented. Nature, however, had not designed him either for an academic or for a parochial career. Men were to him more than letters, and he placed an abounding industry at the call of an abounding ambition. His opportunity came in 1503 when he passed into the service of Sir Richard Nanfan, deputy-lieutenant of Calais. Here for the first time his administrative talents found an adequate field. Sir Richard was elderly, and Wolsey's insatiable appetite for work must have found ample nutrition in the finance and organisation of an important dependency. In 1506, on the retirement of Nanfan, Wolsey was admitted into the royal service, and his fortune was made. Attaching himself particularly to Fox and Lovell, he soon arrested attention by his remarkable gifts in a court where talent was always welcomed and acknowledged. In the spring of 1508 he was employed upon a mission to Scotland, and in the same year was sent to the Low Countries to expedite the proposed marriage between Henry VII. and Margaret. The speed with which he conducted the latter mission gained him the special favour of the

king and he was rewarded with the wealthy deanery of Lincoln. So far from abating, the favouring breeze which had blown him into the port of promotion freshened under the new monarch. Wolsey was more succulent and pliant than Warham, more vigorous than Fox, more capable than Surrey; and he spared no art to win the good opinion of the king. "So fast as the other councillors advised the king to leave his pleasure and to attend to the affairs of the realm, so busily did the almoner persuade him to the contrary."[1] And public rumour had it that Wolsey was the promoter of the French war. CHAP. VII.

The parliament which met on February 4, 1511, was taken fully into the king's counsels. It was told of Scottish outrages, of war between Castile and Guelders, between France and the papacy. The master of the rolls read out an apostolic brief recounting the wrongs done to the papal see by the impiety of the French king, and with such a story placed before it the duty of parliament was clear. Two fifteenths and tenths were granted in the spring, a third in the autumn. The houses occupied themselves with the problem of national defence, the difficulties of which had been materially increased by the personal union of Brittany and France and by the development of a Scottish navy. It was alleged that the Bretons knew every creek and landing-place in Cornwall, and that unless the country were fortified from Plymouth to the Lands-End there would be grave danger of invasion. A statute was passed to promote the use of the long-bow and to enforce the acts against unlawful games which were supposed to compete with the practice of archery. Justices, mayors, and constables in the maritime countries were empowered to impress labour for the construction of fortresses. The preambles to the subsidy acts touched upon every strain calculated to excite the passions of the nation, "the high and insatiable appetite" of the King of France, the "great terrible decrees" of the council of Pisa, and the "subtle, untrue, and crafty ymaginacion" of the King of the Scots "very homager and obediencer of right to your Highness".

Meanwhile the king was giving a practical demonstration of his loyalty both to the Church and to his allies. A

[1] Cavendish, *Life of Wolsey*, p. 25.

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force of 1,500 English archers was in accordance with treaty sent to help Margaret against the Duke of Guelders, while a similar expedition sailed from England in May, under the command of Lord Darcy, to share in the holy war which Ferdinand's great captain Pedro Navarro was waging against the Moors. From neither of these expeditions could anything be definitely inferred as to the military power of this country. Darcy arrived in Cadiz only to find that Ferdinand had no need for his services, and his volunteer crusaders, whose discipline had been none too perfect ashore, put back without a blow struck or a shot exchanged. Sir Edward Poynings, who commanded the Flemish contingent, was more fortunate. In conjunction with a large Burgundian force he assisted in the capture of some paltry fortresses, and in the ineffectual leaguer of Venlo. But there was no heart in the war, and after two months' campaigning the troops returned to England "having been highly feasted and much praised for their valiantness". In the two months' fighting the English losses by war and sickness had not amounted to 100 men.

The scheme of the campaign of 1512 was conceived in the most comprehensive spirit. While the papal and Spanish troops were to attack the French positions in Italy, an English army was to be landed in Aquitaine, to co-operate with a Spanish force of equal numbers. Spain and England between them were to police the seas, England undertaking to deal with the coast between Brest and the mouth of the Thames while the remainder of the French sea-board fell to the share of Ferdinand. As soon as the preparations were completed a second English army would be thrown into Picardy or Normandy. It was stipulated that all conquests made in Aquitaine should be ceded to the King of England. The command of the army was entrusted to the Marquis of Dorset. He was to land at Fuenterrabia, a town upon the southern border of Guienne, with a force of 10,000 men; and there he would be met by an equal force provided by the King of Aragon, one half of which was to be mounted. While the army was waiting at Southampton for a fair wind, news arrived that the papalists had been utterly defeated in the great battle of Ravenna. With a king of soft and doubtful fibre, the intelligence of so great a disaster inflicted upon his principal ally would have

been productive of discouragement and dismay. It is a mark of Henry's temper that the papal reverse only served to quicken his zeal. He wrote to Cardinal Bainbridge that he had not changed his intention of defending the Church, that a fleet of 6,000 men was at sea, that the army of Aquitaine was on the brink of starting, that he had inspected them on their transports, and that a finer army had never been seen, nor one better disposed to die courageously for Church and pope. CHAP. VII.

Henry had yet to learn the full inwardness of his father-in-law. Ferdinand always played the game of politics with his eye firmly fixed upon the main chance. He had joined the attack upon Venice in order to obtain Brindisi, Trani, and Otranto, and he deserted his old allies as soon as Venice had satisfied his appetite. From "the Holy League," as the papal alliance was termed, he had already acquired the investiture of Naples, and he now expected to gain the kingdom of Navarre. It was to this end that he suggested to Henry the project of a campaign in Guienne. While the English troops were engaging the attention of the French, an Aragonese army might quietly turn the house of Albret out of Navarre, and so give to the Spanish kingdom the whole length of the Pyrenean frontier. To this object, and to this object alone, Ferdinand's efforts were directed. He cared nothing about English aspirations after Guienne; he would not sacrifice the body of a Spanish infantryman to promote them; he knew them to be irrelevant to his own security and incapable of satisfaction. When the lure had served his turn, he would throw it away as a useless thing.

On June 7 Dorset set foot upon the coast of Spain. From the first ill-fortune seemed to be in store for the expedition. The victuals were bad, there was no adequate provision of tents, and as the men lay out under the bushes, exposed to the drenching rain and parching heat of a peculiarly pestilential Spanish summer, the bonds of discipline were speedily relaxed. If Dorset had been a vigorous commander, or Ferdinand a loyal ally, these evils might have been remedied. But Dorset had relied upon Spanish transport, which was not forthcoming, while Ferdinand declined to enter Guienne until he had effectually subdued Navarre. As the summer drew on, discontent increased in the English camp. The men died of dysentery; the prices were prohibitive; there was no beer. They said

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they would not abide after Michaelmas "for no man".[1] While Ferdinand was capturing stronghold after stronghold in Navarre, Dorset's force lay idle and helpless before Bayonne. He could not help the Duke of Alva against Navarre, for a campaign in Navarre was not comprised in his instructions. Single-handed, and devoid of horse and adequate artillery-transport, he could not attempt the offensive against the French. He was not strong enough to quell the mutinous spirit of his own men. In spite of Ferdinand's entreaties that the noblemen at least would remain, the whole army resolved to return rather than face the discomforts of a winter campaign. Few episodes in English military history have been more discreditable. There had been peculation in the commissariat; the commander had been feeble and inert; and the men had been guilty of cowardice and mutiny. The moral which Ferdinand wished Henry to draw was that a campaign could not be properly conducted without German mercenaries. The moral which the English king actually drew was that Ferdinand was a slippery ally, and that to despatch 6,000 highly paid German troops to Guienne during the ensuing summer would be to throw good money after bad.

There was one strenuous, if inconclusive, achievement to set off against this deplorable exhibition. The royal navy was still in a rudimentary stage of development. There was no permanent staff of naval officers; the crews were collected for each voyage and disbanded at the end; and though the king had added to his private stock of ships and artillery, he was still in times of war dependent upon external sources of supply, upon pressed merchantmen and the quotas of the Cinque Ports. The inconveniences resulting from this casual and discontinuous system of recruiting the navy were increased by imperfect notions of naval architecture and seamanship. The king's ships with their towering castles at bows and stern, their enormous sails, their crowds of soldiers and sailors were too unwieldy to face a heavy sea or to stand the strain of a winter cruise. Even in the summer months, the navy, partly from faults of structure and partly because it was dependent for its supplies upon an attendant fleet of small victualling vessels,

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, i., 3355.

was unable to exert a continuous pressure upon any part of the enemy's coast. To escort an English army, to ravage the French coast and prey upon French commerce, such functions the fleet was able to discharge; but however superior might be its tonnage, its artillery, or the valour of its bowmen, it could not expect to destroy a rival navy or even to blockade a hostile port. CHAP. VII.

When these limitations have been grasped, it is possible to appraise more exactly the exploits of Sir Edward Howard, the lord admiral, who took the sea with eighteen ships in the month of May. He conveyed Dorset's army to its destination, raided the coast of Brittany, and towed sixty-six captive hulks and merchantmen into harbour. Putting out again in the first week of August with twenty-five ships, he came upon the French fleet lying outside Brest harbour, and fought on August 10 an engagement, rendered memorable by a tragic catastrophe. The *Regent* and the *Cordelière*, the first of 1,000 and the second of some 700 tons came into collision, while the majority of the French fleet sped away into the safe recesses of the harbour. English archers and French crossbowmen interchanged a hot fire, and then the *Regent's* crew boarded the Frenchman. Suddenly—no one knows how—the French powder-magazine blew up, and both ships were involved in flame. Porzmoguer, the French captain, jumped into the sea with his armour and was drowned, and Sir Thomas Knyvet, captain of the *Regent*, perished likewise with the greater part of his crew. The destruction of these two noble vessels, locked in deadly embrace, and sinking with their gallant crews in a consuming fury of smoke and fire, was the great tragedy of the war. Such events do not in themselves decide campaigns, but they stimulate each party to redoubled efforts. Howard vowed that he would never look the king in the face till he had avenged the death of Sir Thomas Knyvet. Two days after the engagement the English landed, captured five and burnt twenty-seven French vessels, and took 800 prisoners.[1]

It was reported in London in November that the king and queen were bent upon continuing the war, but that the council were anxious for peace. If Henry had adopted the council's view no one could have seriously blamed him. Not only had

[1] *Letters and Papers Relating to the War with France*, 1512-13, ed. A. Spont (Navy Records Society), 1897.

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he incurred the burden of a costly expedition to find himself cheated by his ally, but one of the grand purposes of the league, the humiliation of France, had been already effected. The kingdom of Navarre had been severed from the French connexion, and by one of the most sudden oscillations in the military annals of Europe, France had been driven out of Lombardy only a few months after her brilliant victory at Ravenna. If there had ever been any peril in the *conciliabulum* of Pisa, it was effectually laughed out of existence by the military downfall of the French in Italy. Hunted from Pisa to Milan, from Milan to Lyons, the discredited schismatics were only too anxious to make terms with the papacy. Nobody could contend that the Church was any longer in danger, and it was patent to all that never since the year of Agincourt had the fortunes of France descended so suddenly or so far. The Bentivogli had been turned out of Bologna; the Medici had been restored to Florence; under the protection of the Swiss infantry Sforza was enthroned in Milan. In a brief and unfortunate campaign for the recovery of Navarre the whole artillery train of a French expeditionary force had fallen into the hands of Ferdinand. And yet for England to have abandoned the war at this juncture would have involved a grave loss of prestige. Henry was right in thinking that something must be done to retrieve the discredit of the Guienne expedition. He had made great preparations for the invasion of France; he had received a grant from parliament; and the spirit of the nation was high and martial. To accept a peace from the hands of France would look like a confession of failure, as if it were only by the victories of foreign allies that England could be extricated from the consequences of her own military shortcomings.

Before the campaign opened in 1513 a change had come over the complexion of European politics. Julius died in February, and the choice of the conclave fell upon Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici, who took the title of Leo X. The new pope, though desiring like his predecessor the liberation of Italy from the foreigner, was also passionately concerned in promoting the fortunes of his house. He wished particularly to place his brother Giuliano upon the throne of Naples; and while the pursuit of this special object would necessarily bring him

into conflict with Aragon, his artistic and dilettante temperament disqualified him from being an energetic captain of the league. Still the confederation against France was continued, but continued with a change of partners. In March Louis XII. made a treaty with Venice, seeing clearly that it was only through Venetian aid that he could hope to recover Milan; but in allying herself to Venice France threw away the friendship of Maximilian. The emperor therefore now drew closer to the holy league, and on April 5, 1513, the envoys of Leo, Ferdinand, Margaret, and Henry signed a treaty at Mechlin for the joint invasion of France. Maximilian was to receive 100,000 crowns from England's long purse, and two English armies were to be thrown into France. It was soon to be made apparent that the brunt of the war would be borne by England. Four days before his envoys had committed him to a fresh campaign at Mechlin, Ferdinand had signed a year's truce with Louis. CHAP. VII.

Meanwhile the preparations for the invasion of France had been pushed forward with the utmost zeal. In the course of a single year, 1512, eight ships had been built and five purchased for the royal navy, while in the late winter every ship had undergone repairs. "Such a fleet," wrote Howard to the king, who had ordered his admiral to send word "how every ship did sail," "was never seen in Christendom."[1] On April 10 twenty-four ships of the line, carrying 2,880 seamen and 4,650 soldiers, moved out of Plymouth harbour and made for Brest. If a severe blow could be struck at the French navy at the headquarters of the French fleet, the passage of the English army across Dover Straits would certainly be unmolested. When Howard arrived before the great French harbour he was full of confidence. Fifteen French sail had fled before the English approach; there were at least fifty appetising vessels in the port. "Sir," wrote the admiral, "we have them at the greatest advantage that ever man had. The first wind that ever cometh they shall have broken heads that all the world shall speak of it."[2] It was not the French whose broken heads were to furnish a topic to the world. Pregent de Bidoux, admiral of the Mediterranean, had been sent to take command of the French defences in the Channel, and

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, i., 3820. [2] *Ibid.*, 3877.

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Pregent knew his business. He had fortified the harbour; he had laid hands upon twenty-four huge hulks to launch as fire-ships upon an English attack; and he furnished four galleys, manned by convicts from the Angers jail, and provided with basilisks "which could sink a ship whatsoever it were at one blow". It was clearly Pregent's plan to entice the English admiral into the shallow water of the harbour, where the French galleys would easily overpower any English row-boats which could be sent against them, and at the same time would be out of reach of the enemy's ships of the line.

Deficiency of supplies rendered a blockade impossible, and Howard, despite the advice of one of the most prudent of his captains, determined to attack Pregent in his moorings. On Sunday, April 4, 1513, with two row-barges and a couple of crayers the young English admiral made a dash for the galleys. It was a desperate and foolhardy venture. Arrow-shot and gunshot rained from either side of the harbour, but the men steadily rowed on till they came within grappling distance. Then Howard and a score of his men boarded Pregent's galley; but the cable which was fastened round the French capstan became severed, and the English boarding party was left alone to sell life as dearly as life might be sold. A boy saw the admiral wave his hands and heard him cry to the galley: "Come aboard, come aboard!" Then, recognising that all was vain, he took his whistle from his neck, wrapped it up, and threw it into the sea. A moment after he was pushed overboard by the French pikes.[1]

Disheartened and demoralised by the loss of their admiral the fleet returned to Plymouth. Lord Thomas Howard, who was sent down to take up his brother's office, reported that it was the "worst ordered army and furthest out of rule" that he had ever seen. The men said that they would rather face purgatory than renew their acquaintance with "the Trade," and when the captains were asked how they had dared to come home without the king's leave, they replied, in the language of cowed and disheartened men, that their victuals were fast running out, and that one day of calm would have put the fleet at the mercy of the galleys. All this notwithstanding, the army

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, i., 4005.

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under the personal conduct of the king passed the straits without molestation. In numbers and splendour of equipment it presented an imposing appearance. A Venetian reports that the king had 20,000 horse, 12,000 archers, 6,000 halberdiers, 12,000 mace-men, not to speak of some Switzers and a body-guard of 1,000. Even if this estimate is overstrained the English infantry cannot have fallen short of 26,000, nor the cavalry of 9,000, and besides this 14,000 Germans were taken into the English pay. Such a train of artillery had never yet crossed the Channel. Henry seemed bent upon giving a demonstration of English pomp and opulence. He had fourteen fine horses "with housings of the richest cloth of gold and crimson velvet with silver gilt bells of great value". He was accompanied by the priests and singers of his chapel to the number of 115, by the secretaries, clerks, sewers, grooms, and pages of the chamber, by his lutanist, Peter Carmelianus, and by the most important members of his council. Wolsey, Fox, and Ruthall were all in attendance. Nor were the great nobles far inferior to their sovereign in pomp and display. It was deemed necessary for the Earl of Northumberland to be provided with a feather bed and mattress for his pavilion, with cushions of silk, hangings of worsted, twelve dishes, six saucers, twelve silver spoons, two or three folding stools, a folding table, a close carriage with seven horses, two chariots each with eight horses, four carts each with seven horses, not to speak of a steward, a chamberlain, and a treasurer of the household, a treasurer of wars, two chaplains, a gentleman usher of the chamber, a master of the horse, carvers and cupbearers, a herald and a pursuivant.[1] Mobility, it is clear, was not the prime consideration in the English camp.

If Henry had been without allies, the course most conducive to English interests would probably have been an investment of Boulogne. But anxious as he was to secure the co-operation of the emperor and to forward the match between his sister Mary and the archduke, he was induced to adjust his plan of campaign to the wishes of his principal ally. On June 27 the vanguard of the English army, under Shrewsbury, sat down before Thérouanne, a small but well-fortified town in the upper

[1] *Archæologia*, xxvi., 395.

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valley of the Lys, whose strong garrison was a standing menace to the Flemish border; and on August 1 Shrewsbury was joined by the main battle under the command of the king himself. Henry's bearing on this his first campaign won general admiration. He would practise archery with the archers of his guard and surpass them all. One wet night during the march from Calais he declined to undress, but rode round the camp to comfort the watch. When the Germans burnt some churches at Ardres the king, mindful of the sacred character of the expedition, had three of them hanged. On the 9th Maximilian appeared in the English camp with a company of attendants modestly attired in black silk and woollens, and the splendour of the young king shone out the more by contrast with the frugality of the veteran. Henry urged an assault of the town, and said that he would head the attack himself; but Maximilian, who knew the character of the defences and had fought a battle on the ground many years before, counselled delay.

The King of France was now at Amiens, ill and gouty, and as the forces at his disposal were inferior in numbers to the investing army, it was decided to do nothing ambitious. A detachment of Albanian horse, each man with a side of bacon and a packet of powder at his saddlebow, was to steal up to the walls in the early morning of the 16th, throw the supplies within reach of the garrison, and then scamper away. To divert the attention of the besiegers, De Piennes, the governor of Picardy, and La Palice, with a strong mounted contingent, estimated by their adversaries at 8,000, were to appear upon the hills of Guinegate, a mile or two south of Thérouanne, with instructions, however, to avoid a general engagement. The English were informed of the scheme, and by the advice of Maximilian a considerable force of horse, foot, and artillery was moved out in the early morning across the Lys to cut the French from their base at Blangy. Meanwhile the English, Burgundian, and Hainault cavalry were to make a frontal attack upon the relieving force. It would appear that about a league and a half from Thérouanne, De Piennes came into touch with the English cavalry, and at the same moment was apprized of the appearance of a large hostile force in his rear. Leaving the Albanians to execute their mission as best they could, the French commander sounded the retreat. A trot developed into a gallop,

a gallop into a rout, and the famous French *gendarmerie*, despite all the efforts of La Palice to turn them, did not draw rein till they had reached their camp. Among the captives in the "Battle of the Spurs" were the Duke de Longueville and the Chevalier Bayard; and it was reported, with probable exaggeration, that 3,000 Frenchmen fell in the retreat. The Albanians were driven off by Shrewsbury and the fire of two of Henry's big guns. "*Pugna periculo ducum magis quam militum cæde insignis*," says Paulus Jovius, the Italian. The peril was on the French side, though Maximilian, serving as an English soldier, and Henry both took part in the affair. CHAP. VII.

The fate of Thérouanne was settled. It capitulated on August 22, and the garrison, 4,000 strong, marched out with all the honours of war. It was the first town which had been taken by the English in France since the loss of Guienne in 1453. The prize was handed over to Maximilian, and the walls levelled to the ground by order of the king. On the 26th Henry removed to Guinegate, "according to the law of arms, for in case any man would bid battle for the besieging and getting of any city or town, then the winner to give battle and to abide for the same certain days". While the French army was inertly guarding the line of the Somme, Henry repaired to Lille, where he had arranged a meeting with Margaret, the Regent of the Netherlands, in order to confirm the proposed union between Mary and Charles. To that charming and prudent lady, who had never forgiven or forgotten her repudiation by France, nothing could be more welcome than the betrothal of her nephew to an English princess. The festivities were sumptuous; the cordiality was unaffected, and a touch of piquancy was added to the proceedings by the growth of an attachment between the regent herself and a young favourite of the king's, by name Charles Brandon. Henry promoted the flirtation, not without hope that it would blossom into marriage, and then moved out to resume his campaigning. His objective was Tournay, "the wealthiest city," writes Tuke, the clerk of the signet, "in all Flanders, and the most populous of any on this side of Paris".[1] The gates were of iron, the towers of stone, and the heavy guns of Lille were requisitioned

[1] *Cal. State Papers, Venice*, ii., 316.

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for the siege. But there was no garrison in the town, and when the walls were well-nigh levelled to the ground, the city of carpet-makers demanded a parley. On September 24 Tournay formally surrendered itself to the King of England, and the next day the emperor and the Lady Margaret rode in with a splendid suite to offer their congratulations to the conqueror. On the 10th the party was joined by the young Prince of Castile, with whose conversation Henry expressed himself "much delighted". A new treaty was signed against France on October 17, and it was settled that Charles and Mary were to be married before May 15, 1514. Then leaving Poynings behind him in Tournay, Henry embarked for England.

It was part of the traditional political arithmetic to calculate that the Scots would cross the border whenever England was involved in an affray with France, and Henry had made dispositions to meet this eventuality. The marriage of Margaret with James IV. had done nothing to avert, and little to soothe the friction between the two countries. A Scottish warden of the marches had been murdered in a border feud and one of the assassins was sheltered in England. A famous Scottish seaman, Andrew Barton, son and brother of noted pirates, being granted by his sovereign letters of marque against the Portuguese, had captured some English merchantmen. Without so much as preferring a formal complaint to the Scottish court, Henry permitted the two sons of the Earl of Surrey, Lord Thomas and Sir Edward Howard, to sail against the most illustrious sailor of Scotland. In a battle in the Downs in August, 1511, which has become famous in ballad and story, Barton paid for his audacity with his life. His two ships, the *Lion* and the *Jenny Perwin*, were towed into the Thames and incorporated in the English navy; his crews were slain or captured; and all the expostulations of the Scottish king were met by a contemptuous reference to the piratical nature of Barton's operations.

With a little good-will on both sides open rupture might have been avoided, and though James was manifestly arming, the peace was kept through 1511. But when war once broke out between England and France, James was slowly but surely drawn into the trouble. To his credit it must be said that he was not forward to take up arms against the holy league. He

wished to have peace abroad; he despatched an ambassador to reconcile the pope and Louis; he spoke enthusiastically of a crusade. But Lamotte the French envoy was flitting backwards and forwards between Paris and Edinburgh, and could plead in the name of a staunch and ancient friendship. James renewed the ancient league with France not only against England but against any enemy who should attack France; and in July, 1512, Robert Barton took thirteen English prizes. Still overt war was staved off. In March, 1513, an English diplomatist, Dr. West, was sent to Edinburgh to try to induce James to renew the perpetual peace with England; but the Scottish king was already pledged, and West was given to understand that James could never accept the proposal so long as Henry was enrolled among the enemies of France. A token from the French queen, who besought James as her true knight to advance three feet into English ground and to strike a blow for her honour, is said to have stirred the chivalrous king to action; and in the council, despite wise words from Bishop Elphinstone, the vote was cast for war. On August 22 James crossed the Tweed with an army variously computed at 60,000, 80,000, and 100,000 men and proceeded to invest Norham Castle. A preliminary raid, famous in border annals as the "ill-road" under Lord Home, had already been repulsed with considerable loss by the gentlemen and archers of the border. CHAP. VII.

While James was besieging Norham, the country was rallying its forces to meet the invasion. The regency of the kingdom had been entrusted to the queen, and no Englishwoman could have met the crisis in a prouder or more buoyant spirit. While Catharine summoned 40,000 men from the southern counties to meet in London, Sir Francis Lovell collected 15,000 at Nottingham, and Surrey 26,000 at York. It was upon Surrey that the defence of the border had been devolved. He was now in his seventieth year; but his name carried weight in the northern counties, and he had a ripe experience of northern campaigning. Summoning the neighbouring gentry to gather at Newcastle he hurried north over miry roads and under rainy skies to meet the Scots. On August 30 he was at Durham, and there learnt that Norham had surrendered to the invader after a six days' siege. On

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September 4 he sent a herald to James to offer battle. On that day he had been joined by his son Thomas, the lord admiral, with 1,000 men from the fleet.

James lay encamped upon Flodden ridge, a fine defensible position upon the left bank of the Till, which runs northward to join the Tweed near Twizel Bridge, some five miles away. He had already done considerable damage; he had razed the outer defences of Norham; he had captured Wark, Etal, Chillingham, and Ford; and if, as seems probable, his intention was simply to effect a diversion in favour of the French king, that intention had been already secured. Still it was the tempting and gallant course to try conclusions with Surrey. Though the islanders and borderers might prove unstable, and there had already been a considerable shrinkage through desertion, James had so large an advantage over his enemy in numbers that he might fairly count upon victory. His park of artillery was the best which had ever accompanied a Scottish army, and the presence of forty French captains added a much-needed professional element to his force. While Surrey's men were wet, weary and ill-supplied, provisions were abundant in the Scottish camp.

On September 7 Surrey lay at Wooler Haugh, about six miles to the south-east of Flodden crest. The Scottish king had accepted his challenge to battle, but "would take his ground and field at his own pleasure," and was not to be enticed on to the level plain by a false sentiment of chivalry. To attack the Scots in their strong position would have been folly, and on the 8th Surrey recrossed the Till and marched to Barmoor, six miles due west of the Scottish camp. His movements must have been fully visible from Flodden crest, and may have been designed either to provoke an action or to encourage a belief that the English were falling back upon Berwick. Once encamped at Barmoor, the English army was sheltered from observation by a low range of hills; and here Surrey took a momentous decision. On the advice, it is said, of the lord admiral, he determined to place his army between the Scottish border and Flodden crest. Accordingly in the early morning of the 9th the vanguard under the admiral, 9,000 strong and accompanied by the guns, moved due north, and recrossing the Till at Twizel Bridge placed itself across James's communica-

tions. The rest of the army under Surrey crossed higher up the river by Millford and Sandyford, and its operations being conducted within easy reach of the Scottish camp were more exposed to interruption. It was a dangerous plan to separate the two divisions of the English army by so wide an interval, and with a competent antagonist it might have led to disaster. But the passage of van and rear was undisputed. CHAP. VII.

It was between four and five in the afternoon that the English van began to mount the ascent towards Flodden ridge. The men had marched hard upon twenty miles over moist roads, and had tasted nothing stronger than water for the best part of a week; and if James had remained steadfast in his grand position, favoured alike by hill and wind, the issue of the day might have been other than it was. An impetuous impulse threw away all Scotland's advantages. Firing the refuse of his camp that the south-east wind might blow the smoke into the Englishmen's faces, James led his army barefooted "in good order after the Almayns manner without speaking of any a word"[1] down the wet and slippery hillside to the lower heights of Branxton. As the smoke cleared off, the admiral, who was leading the centre of the English vanguard, saw four divisions of the Scottish van separated from his own troops by only a quarter of a mile. He sent a token to Surrey, halted that Surrey's troops might get into touch, and then became involved in the fray. The battle now became a fierce hand-to-hand combat, in which individual courage and prowess counted for more than tactics or leadership. At the first onslaught it seemed as if the day would go in favour of Scotland. On the English right Dacre was deserted by the men of Tynemouth, while Edmund Howard's Cheshire and Lancashire levies fled from the field. These losses, however, were soon repaired. While a charge of horse restored the forces of the day on the extreme right, in the right centre the admiral assisted by the English artillery, which played with great effect upon the descending torrent of Scottish spearmen, overcame the divisions of Huntley, Crawford, and Errol. Meanwhile, on the extreme left of the English position, the highlanders under Lennox and Argyle fled in wild confusion before Sir Edward Stanley's divi-

[1] *State Papers*, iv., 1.

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sion of Lancashire and Cheshire archers. But the brunt of the fighting was in the centre. The king, who, though incapable of generalship, was at least a brave and spirited soldier, dashed down the hill against the white and green uniforms of Surrey's battle with all the picked men of Scotland at his heels. The Scots fought with spears, and when their spears were broken used the sword or the club. The English replied with bills and bows, but though the bills were effective, archery could do little against the mail-clad bodies of the king's division. A duel between James and Surrey might have been evenly contested, but the failure of both the Scottish wings to hold their ground was decisive. As the admiral closed in on the left and Stanley on the right, as Dacre's horse charged in the rear, and Surrey's men held their own in the front, the position of the Scottish centre became desperate. When James fell not a spear's length from Surrey's standard, riddled with arrows and gashed with swords and bills, the hope of Scotland was extinguished. Twelve earls, fourteen lords, an archbishop, a bishop, two abbots, and all the flower of the Scottish gentry had been mowed down on this September afternoon.

> Beside Branxton in a brook
> Breathless they lie,
> Gaping against the moon;
> Their ghosts went away.[1]

Though the shades of evening prevented a prolonged pursuit, some 11,000 or 12,000 Scots were slain in the battle. The English loss was wonderfully slight in comparison, "not 1,500 men slain and taken," says Hall, and other estimates are far lower. All the Scottish ordnance and baggage fell into the hands of the victors. The king's plaid was sent to Henry at Thérouanne; his body was brought to Berwick, embalmed, and then deposited at Sheen. For a long time it was believed by many in Scotland that James was alive, for the body discovered on the battlefield had not the spiked belt of iron with which the unhappy king was wont to appease his unquiet conscience. Alive or dead it mattered little to the general course of history. As the heir to the French crown observed, England would gain nothing by James's disappearance, for the Duke of Albany

[1] "The Scottish Field," *Chetham Miscellanies*, ii., 20.

would shortly go to Scotland, and with his entire affection for France acquit himself better than his predecessor. The last great border battle in English history had indeed broken the military power which it had been one of the main objects of James to build up. But it left Scotland just where Scotland had always been since the origin of the quarrel 200 years before, angry, proud, and restive, and utterly impatient of English claims to interfere with her concerns.[1] CHAP. VII.

Henry returned to meet his parliament in November in a blaze of glory. "Let all other Christian princes take example by this unconquered king," wrote a pious observer, "and be prepared to pour out wealth and blood as he has done in defence of the Church, to gain both from God and man the same reward for their labour. Further, let them take from him a singular example of fidelity, for after a war proclaimed by the confederates of the Church against the schismatics, some have vacillated in their observance of treaties; others have broken faith; but he alone had not only most faithfully performed his promise, but even exceeded it." Nor is this an isolated encomium. One Italian said that for gold, silver, and soldiers no king in Christendom could be compared with him; another that his highness did not seem to be a person of this world, but rather one descended from heaven.[2] It was reported that the victors of Flodden did not go barefooted, did not rob, did not take wenches with them, did not swear profanely, and that there were few who failed daily to recite the office and our Lady's rosary. An Italian poem on the capture of Thérouanne remarked how Henry had spared the churches. He was held up as the type of the Christian warrior, brave, clement, disinterested; and astrologers foretold from the stars that the Turkish tyrant was destined to be conquered by the King of England. Justly did Leo X. reward the champion of the curia with a cap and sword.

Henry's disinterestedness is open to question. Before his entrance into the league he had pressed Julius to confirm any conquests which he might make in France, and, in deference to

[1] The battle has been well described in recent times by A. Lang, *History of Scotland*, i., 376-81; C. Oman in Traill's *Social England*, iii., 75-77; T. Hodgkin in *Archæologia Æliana*, vol. xvi., and C. J. Bates, *Flodden Field*, Newcastle, 1894.

[2] *Cal. State Papers, Venice*, ii., 334, 336.

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his wishes, a brief had been prepared, March 22, 1512, transferring to the King of England the title and the possessions of the most Christian King of France in the event of the English arms being blessed with victory. After the capture of Thérouanne it was believed in London that the king would march upon Paris and renew the fame of Henry V. Bainbridge told the pope that his master wished to go to Reims to be crowned, and pleaded that the brief, which had been deposited with the Cardinal of Sinigaglia, might be published and sent to England.[1] In every treaty mention was made of the "recovery" of the lost possessions in France; and even if the phrase was no longer taken very seriously, it served as a convenient diplomatic pretext. It is hardly possible that Henry and his advisers really thought that they could conquer France; but it is certain that they expected to derive an advantage from the annexation of a town here and a fortress there, and if a papal confirmation of the old title could be wrested from the consistory so much the better. Title and territory were pawns in the game, and had their market value. Still, with all these deductions, it remained a fact that Henry alone of the allies had fought the battle of the Church.

The autumn parliament granted a subsidy of £160,000 in consideration of the king's great victories; and military and naval preparations were seriously pushed on with a view to renewing the campaign. But meanwhile the league was crumbling to pieces. Henry's policy had hitherto been mainly inspired by Ferdinand, and Ferdinand was trickery incarnate. He had already got what he wanted from the English alliance, and had begun to conceive a jealousy of the proposed match between Mary and Charles. He had made a truce with France just at the moment when his co-operation would have been most valuable to England, and he was now plotting a match between Renée, Louis' second daughter, and his namesake and younger grandson, Ferdinand. His scheme was that France should resign to Renée her rights over Milan, abandon her claims on Naples, and assist the house of Aragon to hold

[1] A. Ferrajoli, *Breve inedito di Giulio II.*, *Archivio della Società Romana*, vol. xix., 1896. The brief transferred to Henry "titulum ipsum Christianissimi Regis sive Francorum cum omnibus ipsius Franciæ sive Francorum regni juribus".

Navarre. To throw dust in the eyes of his son-in-law, he suggested that England should send 6,000 Germans to Guienne before June, 1514; and with inimitable effrontery he went about saying that never in future would he allow himself to be abandoned by his friends as he had been forsaken by England. CHAP. VII.

Henry knew that Ferdinand was playing him false. He was very bitter. He said that he would never trust any one again, and he determined to beat his father-in-law on his own ground. On January 9 Queen Anne of France died, and Louis XII. was in the marriage market. He had made his peace with the Church, but he was fifty-two and gouty. Henry determined to offer him his sister Mary's hand, and to steal from Ferdinand and Maximilian the alliance which was to make Milan a Hapsburg principality. Mary was already pledged to Charles, but the prince's council were inclined to the French connexion, and invented pretexts for delay. The prince, it was alleged, was too young or too feeble to marry just yet, and as Maximilian made a truce with France upon his own account, and did not communicate the fact to Henry till three months later, Henry might with reason assert that it was not he who had broken faith.

The first advances towards the French match were dexterously made through the agency of the young Duke de Longueville, one of the prisoners taken at the Battle of the Spurs, and an excellent tennis player, whose winnings from Henry went a long way towards purchasing a ransom. Mary was a gay and graceful girl of seventeen; far too beautiful to be wasted on an elderly and invalid husband, but sufficiently ambitious to appreciate the prospect of being Queen of France. The peace was concluded on July 10, 1514, and in October after a proxy marriage in London, Mary set out with great pomp for France. Tournay was to remain in English hands, and Louis promised to increase the pensions payable from France under the treaty of Etaples. The Kings of England and France were pledged to assist each other against their common foes. It was a brilliant counter-move to Ferdinand's insidious project, and it was capable of specious justification. Henry pointed out to the pope that he had made provision for the entrance into the league of the emperor and the Prince of Castile, and that if no mention had been made of the King of Aragon, it was because Ferdinand

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preferred acting for himself. Margaret was told that the emperor had broken his engagements, and that Henry would have kept his promise if the other side had kept theirs. Meanwhile ambitious plans of revenge were mooted. Charles Brandon, the king's favourite companion, now Duke of Suffolk, had accompanied the Princess Mary to Paris. He was instructed to ask Louis two questions. Would he assist the King of England in expelling Ferdinand from Navarre? Would he, in view of the fact that the kingdom of Castile should descend to sisters, promote Henry's claim upon that portion which belonged to him in virtue of his marriage? Such were the latest refinements of the Christian hero. It was clear that in diplomacy he had now nothing more to learn even from Ferdinand.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ASCENDENCY OF THE CARDINAL.

THE triumphs of the last two years redounded to the fame of the king's principal adviser. Wolsey had financed and organised the war; he openly claimed the credit of the peace. The French marriage, unequal though it may seem, when the ages of the two parties to it are considered, was a brilliant contrivance of diplomacy, brilliant as a counterstroke to the machinations of Ferdinand, and full of opulent possibilities for the kingdom. The reputation of Wolsey grew apace. For the next decade and more Europe is full of his sound. While the king was given over to music, jousts, and hunting, Wolsey was transacting the business of his country. Emoluments and honours were showered on his serviceable head. In 1514 he became Bishop of Lincoln and then Archbishop of York; in 1515 he obtained the cardinal's hat, and succeeded Warham as lord chancellor. In 1518 when the pope proposed to send a legate to England to negotiate a crusade against the Turk, Henry insisted that Wolsey should be associated with the Roman cardinal as *legatus a latere*. Cardinal, chancellor, legate, Wolsey was supreme both in Church and state. As early as March, 1515, he was described as all-powerful with the king and bearing the main burden of public affairs upon his shoulders.[1] Two years later his stature is as that of the king himself. "The Cardinal of York," wrote Chieregato, the apostolic nuncio in 1517, "by reason of his excellent qualities governs everything alone, the king not interfering in any matter but referring the whole to him, whether it relates to foreign or domestic policy, so that foreign envoys fancy themselves negotiating not with a cardinal but with another king."[2] In 1519 he was thus de-

[1] *Erasmi Epp.*, ii., 2; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 87.
[2] *Cal. State Papers, Venice*, ii., 875.

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scribed by Giustinian, the Venetian envoy: "He is about forty-six years old, very handsome, learned, extremely eloquent, of vast ability, and indefatigable. He alone transacts the same business as that which occupies all the magistracies, offices, and councils of Venice, both civil and criminal. . . . He is thoughtful and has the reputation of being extremely just; he favours the people exceedingly, especially the poor, hearing their suits and seeking to despatch them instantly. He makes the lawyers plead gratis for all poor suitors. He is in very great repute, seven times more so than if he were pope."[1] The splendour of the chief minister knew no bounds. He had two great crosses of silver, one for the archbishopric and the other for his legacy, always borne before him by two of the tallest and comeliest priests in the realm. On the checker roll of his household there were no less than 500 persons, noblemen and gentlemen, yeomen selected for their height and beauty, grooms and pages, singing men and clerks. "One has to traverse eight rooms," wrote Giustinian, "before you reach his audience chamber, and they are all hung with tapestry which is changed once a week." His buildings and pictures, his minstrels and choir of singing boys, his apparel, and the crimson velvet liveries of his attendants were as good as money could buy. "He kept a noble house," says Cavendish, his secretary and biographer, "and plenty of both meat and drink for all comers both for rich and poor, and much alms given at his gates." The state papers are full of records of his sumptuous and resplendent banquets. Probably no subject of the crown in the whole course of English history left upon his contemporaries so deep an impression of wealth, power, and magnificence.

The French marriage upon which so many hopes had been built was hardly completed before it was dissolved. On January 1, 1515, Louis XII. died, in his fifty-third year, and the crown of France passed to his nephew, Francis Duke of Angoulême, a youth of twenty years, whose crafty ambitions and heartless frivolities were destined to cost his country dear. All the restless and adventurous spirits in France clustered round the new king, craving excitement and glory from his reign. Ere many weeks had passed it was the common talk that Francis would

[1] Giustinian, *Disp.*, App. ii., 309; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iii., 402.

pass the mountains and recover Milan for the *fleur de lys*. The death of the old king, the snapping of the marriage alliance, the accession to power of the new sovereign, so fresh, enterprising, and incalculable, caused keen mortification and active jealousy in the English court; and the mortification was deepened by the fact that at the same time the country was deprived of a valuable weapon in the contests of diplomacy. The young widow of Louis XII., still a girl in the first blush of her beauty, contracted while in Paris a secret marriage with Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, who had been sent to carry hollow congratulations to the new sovereign of France upon his accession. That the sister of the English king should give her hand to a subject, surreptitiously, without royal sanction and in a foreign capital, was a proceeding calculated to cause deep resentment at the court and great disappointment in the country. The wiseacres of the City were annoyed that so beautiful a princess should be wasted upon a mere love-match when she might have purchased a substantial political alliance; and the council was full of men who clamoured for Suffolk's ruin.

It could not be denied that his fault was grave, and that its consequences might be serious. Wolsey, who represented himself as Suffolk's only friend at the council board, stated that the crime might be condoned by a yearly contribution to the king of £4,000 from the queen's dower, as well as the surrender of all the plate and jewels which Louis had given to his bride, but even so the result was uncertain. The bridegroom was "in the greatest danger that ever man was," and many weeks elapsed before the cloud passed over. However, in the end the affair was condoned, and Wolsey's intercession prevailed. Mary was compelled to cede her plate and jewels, to give up the full amount of her dowry, and to repay the expenses of her marriage with Louis by yearly instalments of £1,000. On May 13, 1515, she was publicly married at Greenwich in the presence of the king and queen and the nobility of the court. Her second husband had already been twice wedded, and his first wife was still alive; but whether these facts ever came to Mary's knowledge is doubtful. Her fancy had been caught by Suffolk's brilliant presence and bluff, frank airs before she had been sacrificed upon the altar of politics; and in giving her hand to the elderly Louis she had extracted a promise from

CHAP. VIII. Henry that she might choose for herself when Louis should die. When that moment came Mary found herself alone and unfriended, exposed to solicitations from every side, and she threw herself into Suffolk's arms. Her appeal for mercy was touching and romantic, but romance had no place in Henry's court. At least the king and Wolsey between them took care that romance should pay toll to the exchequer.

A far more serious cause of anxiety followed. On April 5 a treaty was signed between England and France, and then, having secured himself from his northern enemy, Francis sped off for Italy at the head of 110,000 men. That he might be the less embarrassed on the Channel coast, he had sent the Duke of Albany into Scotland well-provisioned with money; and a pretender to the English crown was also at hand, in the shape of Richard de la Pole, who might prove serviceable should occasion arise. Nor were these the sole precautions. Francis had signed a treaty with Charles, the new governor of the Netherlands, had won the friendship of Venice and of Genoa, and was in negotiation with the pope. The expedition was conducted with the greatest secrecy, and the English court derived its information of French designs from oblique and unauthoritative rumours. Wolsey spoke of the French king's conduct with great heat and bitterness. "He never writes hither; he does not impart any of his secrets; he treats all our subjects as enemies, and allows his own people to capture the ships and vessels of England without enforcing any compensation soever." He has sent the Duke of Albany, who styles himself governor, into Scotland, and will not desist until he has compassed the death of the queen and the infant king in order to make himself master of that realm." The war party in the council who had opposed the French alliance pressed their point with exultation. "I tell you, *domini oratores*," said Wolsey to the Venetian envoys, "that we have ships here in readiness, and in eight days could place 60,000 men on the soil of France." Henry affected to think that Francis was too much afraid of England to venture across the mountains. "My belief," he boasted to Giustinian, "is, that if I choose he will not pass the Alps, and if I choose he will." But all this indignation and bluster were thrown away. Francis crossed into Italy and beat the famous Swiss infantry at Marignano, September

13, 14. Sforza renounced his rights on Milan and accepted a French pension, and the pope, who wished at all costs to secure the Medici in Florence, made his peace with the conqueror. It seemed probable that all Italy might become a province of France. CHAP. VIII.

From the first Henry had conceived the utmost jealousy of his younger rival. On May 1, as Pasqualigo was breakfasting by command in one of the bowers in the garden of Greenwich, the king came in dressed in green, shoes and all, and addressing him in French said, "Talk with me awhile. The King of France, is he as tall as I am?" I told him there was but little difference. He continued, "Is he as stout?" I said he was not; and then he inquired, "What sort of legs has he?" I replied, "Spare". Whereupon he opened the front of his doublet, and placing his hand on his thigh, said, "Look here; and I have also a good calf to my leg".[1] And to this rivalry the events of the summer and autumn gave a keen and bitter tinge. Beside the great victory of Marignano, the vaunted successes of Tournay and Thérouanne looked mean and shabby. Francis had acted on a larger scale, and achieved a more brilliant result, and in the meantime his conduct wore an air unfriendly to England. Wolsey was specially concerned with the fact that the collection of the revenues of his see of Tournay was impeded by the Archbishop of Reims, an intimation that the severance of that city from France was not so complete as he had reason to expect; and to these personal considerations other causes were added, calculated to inflame the irritation against the French.

Slipping out of St. Malo on May 18, and successfully avoiding the English cruisers, Albany had landed on the western coast of Scotland to give heart to the partisans of the French connexion. He was received with enthusiasm. Queen Margaret, already unpopular as an Englishwoman, had added to her difficulties by an unwise marriage with an unpopular Scot, Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus; and a Scottish parliament meeting at Edinburgh in July, and vehemently desiring the overthrow of the English party, named Albany protector of the kingdom until the infant king should have reached the age of eighteen. Albany struck at the adherents

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 411.

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of England, laid siege to Stirling Castle, and forced the queen to surrender her two sons to his charge. Henry offered his sister a refuge in England, and Lord Dacre, warden of the western marches, who from his stronghold at Naworth had busily sown dissension in Scotland through the summer, concerted her escape. On September 30 she was south of the Cheviots at Harbottle, and in this Northumbrian stronghold a week later gave birth to a "fair young lady," afterwards famous as Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, ancestress of James I. of England.

Albany had been almost as successful in Scotland as Francis had been in the Milanese, and at the news of the expulsion of Margaret the war spirit mounted high in the English council. "Believe me," said Wolsey, after recounting the story of the queen's humiliation with great passion, "his majesty and the kingdom will not brook such an outrage."[1] In October the Venetian ambassadors reported that ships in the Thames were being armed and supplied with military stores. At the launching of the king's great five-masted warship, the *Henry Grace de Dieu*, no pains were spared to impress the Venetians with England's naval prowess. The king himself, "dressed gally-fashion, with a vest of gold brocade reaching to the middle of the thigh," showed his ship to the Venetians, and to the Venetians alone, as a compliment to their able seamanship. It was given out that parliament, summoned for November 14, was to discuss an expedition to Scotland. But however bitterly the double triumph of France was felt, open war would have been the most fruitless and costly of expedients. The expenditure of the last three years had been enormous, and Wolsey, who had been a college bursar, was as much interested in public economy as he was prone to private magnificence. A formal expedition into Scotland to recover the control of the royal princes would certainly fail of its object, and if a means of annoying Albany was to be found, it was far more efficacious to loose the moss troopers of the border, to launch the Humes against the regent, and to stir all the private factions of that distracted country.

Besides this, only £45,637 13s. 8d. had been collected out of the £110,000 voted by the parliament of 1514. Such defi-

[1] *Cal. State Papers, Venice*, ii., 651.

ciencies were common and pointed to imperfect assessment and inadequate machinery for collection. Accordingly, when the houses met in November they granted a fifteenth and tenth payable on November 1, 1516, to make good the shortcoming, but nothing more. To encourage the navy, licences contrary to the navigation act were repealed, and a grant was made of the customs on wool and wool fells to the merchants of the staple upon condition that they should pay to the king a yearly sum of £10,022 4s. 8d. to defray the military and civil expenses of Calais and the marches. But these measures, though framed for national defence, were not part of a scheme for aggressive war. CHAP. VIII.

Having decided for sufficient reasons against open war, the king and Wolsey would have done wisely to keep the peace. Francis was still a nominal ally, and nothing in his recent proceedings could strictly be construed as a breach of his engagements to England. The help which he had given to Albany had been granted in conformity with treaties between France and Scotland, and was openly avowed. But he had been too successful, too negligent of Henry, and if his luck continued, —he had won over eight Swiss cantons to his side by December 7,—he might overset the political balance of Europe. Accordingly Wolsey hit upon a policy which was as crooked as it was ineffective. While maintaining a show of open friendship with Francis, he determined to send secret subsidies to the emperor to assist him to oppose the French arms in Lombardy. Richard Pace, a man of letters as well as a diplomatist, was despatched to Zurich to hire Swiss troops with English gold, and to prevent the remaining five cantons from falling under French influence. The best that can be said for such a policy is, that it probably quieted the more clamorous members of the war party and gave a comparatively innocuous vent to the resentment aroused by the achievements of Francis. But in spite of Wolsey's solemn and repeated lies, the fact that English money was being sent into the continent became known to the Venetian ambassadors as early as December, 1515, and once known to Venice, it became the open talk of Europe.

The disclosure of the secret, however, would not have mattered to Wolsey if England's mercenaries could have swept the French out of Milan. But the expedition, which had been subsidised by drafts upon the English treasury, failed in an

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unexpected and inexplicable manner. Maximilian, with 30,000 Swiss and German freebooters, swept down over the Brenner, crossed the Mincio and Adda, and on March 24 was within nine miles of Milan. But just as the prize seemed within his grasp, for the French garrison was ill provisioned and the city disaffected, the emperor slipped away by night and withdrew to Verona. Whether he had been bribed by the French, whether, as he averred, he was unable to keep his troops together for lack of pay, whether his heart suddenly failed him at the prospect of resistance, cannot be determined. He abandoned his army, and the expedition broke up in confusion. So far as England was concerned it had resulted in a waste of treasure and an open advertisement of diplomatic duplicity. Nevertheless money still continued to be sent across to keep the war alive in Italy. In June Wolsey treated for a league with the pope, Maximilian, Charles, and the Swiss, offering to include Venice, if she would desert her French ally, and to settle the Venetian dispute with the emperor. It was represented that resistance to France was essential to the balance of power in Europe. "I am contented with my own," said Henry to Giustinian, "I wish only to govern my own subjects; but nevertheless I will not allow any one to have it in his power to govern me." He alleged that though he had subsidised Maximilian, he had done so not to injure the King of France, his confederate, but to protect his friend the emperor, and that it would be open to Francis to join the general league provided that he did not insist upon being monarch of the universe. But Venice was not to be drawn by these temptations from her alliance with France, especially as on June 28 the imperialists had sacked Vicenza. Coaxed and threatened by turns the Venetian envoy never flinched from the straight line.

According to rumour, Wolsey's foreign policy of underhand subsidies provoked the resignation of Warham and Fox. Both were old men, and age may have been a more important factor in their decision than disapproval. But the simultaneous withdrawal of the two highest officials in the state, and the transference of the great seal to Wolsey and of the privy seal to his henchman, Bishop Ruthall, looks as if the change were connected with affairs of policy; nor is it improbable that these experienced and astute officials disliked Wolsey's tortuous ways,

and from their knowledge of Maximilian's antecedents foretold the failure of the English largesses.[1] CHAP. VIII.

While Wolsey was talking of "a holy confederation for the benefit of the Christian powers," and attempting to sow dissension between Venice and France, an event occurred which rudely disturbed the current of his hopes. On January 23, 1516, "hunting and hawking to the last in fair weather or foul, and following more the counsel of his friends than his physicians," Ferdinand died, and the throne of Spain passed to his grandson Charles, then a youth of eighteen, but already master of the Netherlands and the prospective heir of the Hapsburg dominions. The advisers of Charles, chief of whom was Croy, Lord of Chièvres, were Flemings, and their policy was to stand well with France. In this they were wisely inspired. It was essential that the king should be able to reach Spain unmolested; he was as yet too poor to engage with any effect in an Italian campaign against Francis, and if he broke with France he would assuredly have trouble in Guelders, and be unable to secure the Spanish crown. The situation was so clear that it was frankly explained to the English envoys who were sent to Brussels to offer baits of money and friendship to Charles and his counsellors.

Nevertheless an active struggle was carried on for the goodwill of Charles between London and Paris. The last passages of diplomacy were wrapped in profound secrecy, but on August 13, 1516, they issued in the treaty of Noyon between Charles and Francis. By this arrangement France renounced her claims upon Naples, while Charles consented to marry Louise, a daughter of Francis I., then an infant one year old. The powers further pledged themselves to invite Maximilian to surrender his claims upon Brescia and Verona for 200,000 florins. Would Maximilian be enticed into the net? That ingenious and gifted politician had used every art to extract money from the English alliance with a strict determination to do just so much or so little for his paymaster as might suit his own convenience. He had offered to make Henry Duke of Milan, to escort him to Rome, and to resign the imperial crown in his favour. He had

[1] Fox, however, pays a remarkable tribute to Wolsey's prompt administration of justice and zeal and labour for the king's rights, duties, and profits (*Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 1814).

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promised to descend upon the Netherlands in order to dismiss the wicked councillors who were inclining Charles to France; he solemnly assured Sir Robert Wingfield, the credulous English envoy, that he had no part in the treaty of Noyon, that he was impregnable to French ducats. On October 29 he even signed a league with England, so framed that Charles might subsequently enter, and elicited 40,000 English crowns to prevent Verona from falling into the hands of the Venetians. But all Wolsey's efforts were in vain. In December Maximilian joined the treaty of Noyon and compromised his claims upon Italy for 200,000 ducats. Verona was handed over to Charles, who handed it to Francis, who handed it to Venice. The English had been deceived. They had paid more than a million and a half crowns to help Maximilian in Italy, and he abandoned Italy. They had paid for his journey to the Low Countries on the understanding that he was to dismiss his grandson's councillors and reverse the treaty of Noyon. He had accepted and spent the money; but the councillors were not dismissed, and so far from reversing the treaty of Noyon he had joined it himself. "*Mon fils*," said the gay old statesman to his sombre grandson, "*vous allez tromper les Français et moi je vais tromper les Anglais.*"[1] A transparent cloud of polite professions could not veil his airy perfidy. The enemy had triumphed all along the line. Venice, the ally of France and the necessary support of her Milanese dominions, was restored to power. Despite English gold the thirteen cantons were leagued to France in a perpetual peace signed at Freiburg on November 29. The emperor and the archduke were won over to the opposition.

Wolsey's policy was unpopular both with nobles and people. The Duke of Norfolk assured Giustinian that the whole country desired a general peace; and this not only that taxation might be lightened but also in view of the alarming situation in the east. While Western Europe was in a fret for a small Italian duchy, Selim I. was advancing the Ottoman power with gigantic strides. In 1516 he conquered Northern Mesopotamia from the Persians, beat the Mamelukes at Aleppo, and annexed Syria. In 1517 he won Egypt in a single battle, and obtained from the last of the caliphs of the Abbasid line the surrender of the

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 2930.

supreme religious authority over Islam. Master of Turkey and Egypt, sultan and caliph, Selim I. was the greatest political figure in the world, and his conquering energy was now destined to be turned towards the west. Unless help were promptly forthcoming Hungary and Rhodes would certainly fall into the hands of the Turks. CHAP. VIII.

The idea of a crusade had never disappeared from diplomatic talk, and was still a feature of the foreign policy of the curia, though now subordinate to the more immediate and practical object of safeguarding and extending the temporal power in Italy. In March, 1517, Leo X. issued a bull imposing a five years' truce upon Christendom, and sent to all the European courts a project for a combined expedition against the Turk. The question of a crusade and even of a partition of the Turk's dominions was discussed at a conference at Cambray between the envoys of Maximilian, Francis, and Charles, and the imagination of the chivalrous emperor was flattered by the prospect that as captain general of a European crusade he might be the means of saving Hungary from the infidel. On March 11, 1517, the three monarchs went so far as to pledge themselves to a reciprocal protection of their states and to a crusade against the Turk.

While the three great continental powers were drawing closer at Cambray, Wolsey was reopening negotiations with France. The device of covert war had proved to be an expensive failure, and though it was desirable to conceal the change of plan as long as possible from the Venetians, the advisability of a more cordial understanding with France was too clear to be mistaken. The secret negotiations opened in the early spring of 1517 steadily ripened through the summer. In October French commissioners appeared in England, and in order to avoid interference from Charles, two English envoys were sent into Spain to explain away the negotiations and to warn Charles against French artifice. To Sebastian, complaining of the progress of the Turk, Henry said that the true Turk was the King of France. "You Venetians," said Wolsey, "have often been deceived by the Kings of France." Sebastian replied: "Louis is not Francis". "Both are French," said the cardinal.[1] It was part of the settled policy of Wolsey and

[1] *Cal. State Papers, Venice*, ii., 1022.

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Henry to try to frighten the Venetians about the league of Cambray, while they steadily pushed on negotiations with France. The main question centred round Tournay, which Francis was willing to purchase and Henry was willing to sell; but the birth of a dauphin on February 28, 1518, seemed to open out prospects of a match with Princess Mary, then a child two years old. In August, 1518, a splendid French mission was sent into England, and London was dazzled by processions, masques, and banquets, devised with all the splendour with which king and cardinal were accustomed to invest great passages of public policy. On October 2 a treaty of universal peace, professing to include England, France, the empire, the papacy, and Spain was signed in London, and flanked two days later by treaties for the marriage of Mary and the dauphin, for the cession of Tournay, and for the settlement of marine disputes. On October 5 the princess was married by proxy at Greenwich. By a treaty signed on October 8 it was arranged that the French and English kings should meet at Sandingfield, near Calais, in the following spring.

For England and for Wolsey the treaty of 1518 was a diplomatic triumph, coming all the more gratefully for the rebuffs and disappointments of the three preceding years. The Bishop of Paris remarked that Wolsey had driven a hard bargain, and the compliment was deserved. Tournay had been a costly and an anxious possession. It was now ceded to France for the handsome sum of 600,000 crowns. In lieu of the revenues of the bishopric which he had never enjoyed, Wolsey received a pension of 12,000 livres. Albany, who had returned to France upon a visit in June, 1517, was to be prevented from again disturbing the peace of Scotland. "Knowing the cardinal to be greedy of glory and covetous of praise," Giustinian told him that he would obtain immortal fame by this alliance, "for whereas the pope had laboured to effect a quinquennial truce, his lordship had made perpetual peace; and whereas such a union of the Christian powers was usually concluded at Rome, this confederacy had been concluded in England, although the pope was its head".[1] Fox wrote on October 30, 1518, that "it was the best deed ever done for England; and next to the king the praise of it was due to Wolsey".[2] For Wolsey it was a great

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 4453. [2] *Ibid.*, 4540.

personal triumph. The legate Campeggio had been outshone by his English fellow, and London for the moment had become the diplomatic centre of Europe. But the pretext was hollow and the permanent result upon the balance of power was negligible. The crusade was never accomplished, and Syria and Egypt still remained under the control of the Turk. A new question, far more interesting to the western powers than a Turkish war, rose suddenly above the horizon.

While the sovereigns of Europe were collecting tithes from their clergy for the holy war, and papal collectors were selling indulgences to the scandal of some scrupulous minds, the empire became vacant by the death of Maximilian on January 19, 1519. For a few months diplomacy was busy with the choice of a successor. The King of France poured money into Germany, and was supported in his candidature by the pope; the King of England sent Pace to counteract French designs with the electors; but the issue was never really in doubt. Germany would not tolerate a French ruler; and on June 28, 1519, Charles of Spain was elected King of the Romans.

This election marks the beginning of a long struggle between France and the empire for the hegemony of Europe, a struggle in which the two contending powers were so equally balanced that there was little danger of a decisive issue. The contest destroyed all hope of concerted action against the Turks, led to the downfall of Rhodes and to the annihilation of the Hungarian chivalry on the field of Mohacs; it paralysed German government, brought the landsknechts sweeping into Italy, and profoundly influenced the policy of the curia, and through the curia the current of political and religious development in England. The whole course of European history has been affected by this great duel of the sixteenth century.

In religion, no less than in politics, symptoms were by this time evident of a change calculated to transform the fabric of ecclesiastical convention. In 1517 Martin Luther pinned his famous theses upon the door of the castle church of Wittenberg, and found that he had given utterance to the secret convictions of a nation. Summoned in the following year to answer for his heresies, he had obtained the papal consent to be heard at the diet of Augsburg instead. There he stood, a representative of the Teutonic conscience, in its revolt against the most flagrant

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abuses of the Roman system. As yet he did not know whither he might be led; but the conviction within him of the utter unworthiness of man, of his consequent inability to be saved by good works, of his inability to be saved by any power short of the divine grace, was intense, and already formulated and uttered in his Wittenberg teaching. And this conviction was a thing of such explosive force that penances, pilgrimages, indulgences, and the thoughts upon which they rested would have little chance of surviving its shock. He had already said that a sacrament would not save without grace; he had already questioned the plenary power of the pope. He now declined to retract at the bidding of the papal legate. In two years the obscure Saxon friar had become the greatest force in Germany, reflecting all that was best and much that was less good in the German temperament, high-courage, deep, tender, simple devotion, music and joy, the frank, homely spirit, eloquence that poured itself out in endless sermons and pamphlets and letters and books, a great sense of the beauty of words both in German and Latin, a nature so strong, various, abounding, and unreserved that his table talk has become a classic; but irascible, besieged by dark and morbid superstitions, tempestuous and often foul in controversy, lacking the gift of measure, and so sustained and circumscribed by his own peculiar religious experience that other ways of thought and feeling excited in him unintelligent and violent repulsion. With all his faults and narrowness he was one of the greatest religious leaders in history; and at this moment the incarnation of the vague and multitudinous discontent, social, political, religious, intellectual, which was fermenting through the length and breadth of Germany. Such were the new forces and the new combinations on the continent.

The spirit of violent self-criticism which had now begun to rend Germany had as yet hardly shown itself in England, though there is ample reason to believe that Lollardy maintained its hold in certain humble regions of society. Yet if the claims of the Church were still generally uncontested, the new learning which, under Henry VII., had been the prize of the few, now began to excite the kind of ignorant hostility which waits upon success. The foundation of a school for boys, taught on a rational plan, and through the medium of Greek and Latin authors, had been one of the principal achieve-

ments of Dean Colet. A bishop denounced St. Paul's school as a useless, pestiferous thing, and a house of idolatry.[1] In 1516 Erasmus published at Basle an edition of the New Testament based upon a collation of the Greek manuscripts, and by that single act set New Testament studies upon a sound foundation. He was informed that a Cambridge college had put out a decree that on no account should a copy of his New Testament be received within its precincts.[2] At Oxford the battle was openly waged between the Trojans and the Greeks. In the Lenten sermons of 1518 the new studies were attacked from the university pulpit; undergraduates and masters rioted in the streets over the respective merits of Scotus and Plato; and all the forces of ignorance and obscurantism were ranged in the defence of the most useless and paralysing parts of the machinery of medieval education.

It is unlikely that the sympathies of the nobility were very actively enlisted either on the one side or the other in this academic contest. Richard Pace records how in his hearing a gentleman attired in hunting gear gave vent to the following characteristic reflection: "By the Body of God I would sooner have my son hanged than a bookworm. It is a gentleman's calling to be able to blow the horn, to hunt, and to hawk. He should leave learning to the clodhoppers."[3] Yet a cultured class was growing up, not only in the universities, but also round the court, which was not only alive to the importance of the humane studies, but of a temper to appreciate the new style of continental polemic. The *Epistolæ obscurorum virorum* was a satire upon the monks, too gross to be enjoyed now by the cultivated taste, but at that time laughed over till the tears ran wherever books were read in Germany. The satire crossed the Channel and had an immediate success. "It is read everywhere,"[4] wrote More to Erasmus in October, 1516; and its popularity was due far more to the tendency which it represented than to literary brilliance or distinction. Signs were beginning to appear that the Church system of the middle

[1] *Erasmi Epp.*, App. 406; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 1027.

[2] *Erasmi Epp.*, ii., 10; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 2321. Some of the bishops were more enlightened; *Erasmi Epp.*, App. 65; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 2074.

[3] Pace, *De Fructu*, p. 12; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 3765.

[4] *Erasmi Epp.*, App. 87; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 2492.

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ages was in danger, no less than the system of education with which it had been allied. In 1515 a storm cloud, premonitory of shattering gales, gathered round the fabric, and strained seriously and for the first time its powers of defence.

On December 4, 1514, a respected and substantial merchant-tailor, by name Richard Hunne, was discovered hanging by his neck from a beam in his prison chamber in the Lollards' Tower at St. Paul's. The Bishop of London, his chancellor, Dr. Horsey, and the other officials connected with the bishop's prison, put it about that Hunne had committed suicide; but the general feeling in the city was that the man had been murdered, and that his murder was a foul retribution for a course of persistent, skilful, and spirited opposition to some of the most unpopular clerical pretensions. The story soon got about London that Hunne, who was a freeman of the city, had been sued by one Thomas Dryfield, priest of St. Mary Malfellow, for declining to give the bearing-sheet of his dead baby as a mortuary fee; that on the advice of counsel he had sued the plaintiff in a *præmunire* on the ground that the spiritual court before which he had been cited sat by the authority of the legate, and that the king's lieges could not be haled before a foreign tribunal; that the clergy had parried the attack by charging Hunne with heresy, and that the Bishop of London, Richard FitzJames, had, after an examination productive of an avowal of some verbal indiscretions, committed him to the Lollards' Tower. Here, according to the popular theory, he had been secretly done to death, not because he was the possessor of a copy of Wycliffe's Bible nor for any weighty doctrinal reasons, but because, though submitting himself to episcopal correction on matters of faith, he had refused to discontinue his action in the king's court against a sordid and avaricious priest. Three years before a man had been haled up before the Bishop of London for saying that St. Paul's was a den of thieves; it was now the popular opinion that to the vice of avarice some of the clergy of the cathedral had added the graver offence of murder.

A coroner's jury examined the body, dismissed the theory of suicide, and charged Dr. Horsey and two of his menials with the crime. The three men were committed to take their trial, and one of them, Charles Joseph, the sumner, was constrained by "pain and durance" to a confession of guilt. In alarm the

bishop wrote to Wolsey, begging that the matter might be referred to the king's council, since it would be futile to expect justice of a London jury, "so set were they on heretical depravity".[1] All London was convulsed with interest over this mysterious case, which continued to divide and excite opinion for a whole generation. Was it likely that a man so proud, high-hearted, and popular would have killed himself in cowardice? "Could he have raised himself on the stool to commit the act? Was it not too unstable? Was not the noose too loose, too slight to have been the real instrument of destruction? How upon the hypothesis of suicide could the bloodstains on the body be accounted for?" The text of the inquest, with subsequent additions, was circulated in pamphlet form, and the air was full of inaccurate and untested surmises.

To turn, if possible, the current of popular sympathy, the bishop determined to proceed against the dead body of Hunne for heresy. A fresh list of articles was made out, based, in the main, upon an English version of the Bible found to be in Hunne's possession, and containing a prologue full of questionable matter. On December 16 sentence was delivered at St. Paul's in the presence of the lord mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs of London. The long tale of heretical propositions was read out, and proclamation was made that if any one would appear to defend them he should be heard. The three bishops, the six notaries, the twenty-five canonists, the assemblage of common clergy waited in confident expectation. The voice of Hunne was for ever silent, and no champion of Lollardy was likely to risk his life or his living before such a tribunal. The dead man was pronounced a heretic, and his body handed over to the secular power to be burned; and burned it was at Smithfield on December 20, to the grief and indignation of the people.

It seems probable now, though far from certain, that Hunne, conscious of midnight Scripture readings and forbidden books, and fearing the disclosures that might come, put an end to his life in a moment of desperation. But if this be so, it only brings out into greater prominence the readiness of the capital to believe ill of the priests, readiness as conspicuous at West-

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 2.

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minster as it was in the city and at the court.[1] A bill, promoted in the commons for restoring to the children of Richard Hunne the goods of their father, received the king's assent after a first reading in the lords. While the Bishop of London declared before the lords in parliament that the jury were "false perjured caitiffs," the enemies of the clergy promoted a bill to declare the jury "true men". So high rose the tide of passion and curiosity that the king and his council held an examination into the whole affair at Baynard's Castle. It would seem that they were satisfied that the murder was not proven, for when the prisoners pleaded "not guilty" before the king's bench, the king ordered his attorney to stay the prosecution. But though Horsey and his men were released, a dark shadow still rested upon them, and the bishop's chancellor, if his enemies speak truth, never dared to show his face in London again. It was still generally believed by men who fell short of Sir Thomas More in the gifts of perspicacity and persiflage, that a black murder had been committed under high ecclesiastical sanction; and Edward Hall, a barrister of Gray's Inn, has stamped the force of this indignant conviction upon the pages of his gorgeous chronicle.[2]

Meanwhile a grave matter of debate, closely allied to the celebrated cause, and therefore likely to attract more heat than light to its consideration, was opened in convocation and in parliament. No part of the Church system was less defensible than the obsolete benefit of clergy, which screened clerical murderers and thieves from the salutary rigour of temporal justice. Framed for archaic and violent times, the privilege was now anomalous, harmful to public security, and offensive to the instinct of civil equality. Any rascal in orders who could patter a verse of the psalms might plead his clergy, and so obtain the removal of his case from a court where he was liable to be hanged to a tribunal which, however effective as an instrument of inquisition, could but enjoin uncomfortable acts of penance, or in the last resort sentence its convict to the loss of orders. But it was

[1] For the anti-clericalism of the courtiers, see *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 4074.

[2] Hall, *Chron. of Hen. VIII.*, ed. Whibley, i., 129-42; Foxe, iv., 183-99; More, *English Works*, pp. 235-40, 297-99; Alaric Copi, *Dialogi sex*, ed. 1566, pp. 847-50; Tyndale, *Answer to Sir T. More's Dialogue*, pp. 166-68.

for this privilege that St. Thomas of Canterbury had fought and died, and so long as there was an ecclesiastical majority in the house of lords, parliament was unlikely to abolish it. Nevertheless, the influence of public opinion, acting either through the medium of the king, or by the voice of the lay members of parliament, began at last to make some impression upon this hoary abuse. The fourth parliament of Henry VII. declared that clerks convict should be burnt in the hand; the second parliament of Henry VIII. enacted that murderers and robbers in minor orders should be deprived of benefit of clergy. Salutary and important as this last statute proved to be, it was so great an innovation that, in order to prevent opposition, it passed with a proviso that it should only remain in force until the next parliament. Accordingly, when in January, 1515, another parliament was gathered, the question of clerical immunity became a theme of hot and passionate controversy. There could be no mistake as to the temper of the knights and burgesses of the commons, and in March a bill was passed through the lower house for renewing the measure of 1512. CHAP. VIII.

In these circumstances it was an act of temerity, though clearly sanctioned by the most recent pronouncement from Rome, when the Abbot of Winchcombe preached at Paul's Cross that to deprive felonious deacons or acolytes of their immunity contravened the law of God and the liberties of the Church. The temporal lords, and several "honourable knights" and substantial persons of the commons' house, brought the sermon before the notice of the king, and prayed that he might give the matter his consideration. Henry was as proud of his theology as he was jealous of his prerogative, and was nothing loth to preside over a tournament of learning. Protagonists were chosen to argue the case at Blackfriars before the king, his judges, and temporal counsel. The Church was represented by the Abbot of Winchcombe, the king by Dr. Henry Standish, warden of the Greyfriars in London, and well known already as a favourite preacher at the court. It was a debate between fresh and outworn modes of thought, between the medieval and the modern spirit. When the abbot urged the sanctity of a papal decree, Standish pointed out that the public welfare was the paramount consideration, that the decree in question had never been received in England, and that papal

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decrees could not be so sacred since the greater part of the bishops of England violated them. When the abbot quoted the text, "Touch not mine Anointed," *Nolite tangere Christos meos* (Ps. cv. 15), Standish explained its historical significance, meeting unintelligent literalism by rational interpretation. So unequal was the contest that some members of the commons urged the bishops to compel the abbot to preach a recantation sermon at St. Paul's. But the bishops were still bent on defending the indefensible, and a violent contest arose in parliament, which was only suspended by the adjournment of the houses in April.

When parliament met again in November, it was determined by the leaders of the clerical party to confront their most formidable opponent on the uncertain ground of principle. Standish was summoned before convocation to defend theses, which it did not require a great stretch of imagination to believe would be construed into heresy by that orthodox assembly. He had said that a temporal judge could convene clerks before his court; had denied the sanctity of minor orders; had asserted that a papal decree did not bind a region where the usage was contrary to it, and that it was within the province of the temporal head of the state to reprove a bishop for an improper use of his punitive powers. In ordinary times these points might have been argued out with the calm appropriate to an assemblage of divines; the audacious friar, worsted by an array of learning, might have made his submission, and the authority of the Church have been reinstated in comforting tranquillity. But parliament was now sitting, and the law courts had resumed their labours. In Westminster and in the Temple the action of convocation was viewed in the light of an audacious attack upon the temporal jurisdiction of the crown, and as an insidious attempt to establish the principle that however many Hunnes were murdered in episcopal prisons, no secular authority had the right to bring the assassins to account. Standish appealed to the king for protection, and at the prompting of the commons' house the temporal lords and justices entreated Henry to safeguard his temporal jurisdiction according to his coronation oath. The clergy were seriously alarmed. The delights of the summer vacation had done nothing to appease the indignation excited in the hearts of

the commons at the famous tragedy of the previous winter. A bill was again introduced to limit benefit of clergy, and in the course of the session a petition was made to the crown which, while clearly prompted by the experiences of Richard Hunne, anticipates in a remarkable degree another and more famous parliamentary protest delivered fourteen years later against the abuses of clerical jurisdiction.[1] It reported that clergymen declined to bury their parishioners unless they were rewarded by the most precious jewel, suit of clothes, or other possession of the deceased person; and it prayed that every incumbent should be compelled to bury the dead or to administer the sacrament to the sick upon penalty of £40.[2]

In such an atmosphere as this it was well to walk with circumspection. Convocation explained to the king that it was not attacking Standish for any words he might have spoken as counsel to the king, but that the incriminated propositions had been derived from lectures or sermons previously delivered at St. Paul's, where they would be likely to find congenial listeners. But the case was now removed to a higher tribunal. The king, assured by Dr. Veysey, the dean of his chapel, that the convening of clerks before temporal judges could well stand with the law of God and the liberties of the Church, determined to hear the issue himself. Standish was summoned to Blackfriars to plead before his majesty in the presence of the judges, the king's counsel, the temporal and spiritual lords, and some members of the lower house. It was no small issue which was to be decided. The Church was now claiming not only that the temporal judge had no right to try a clerk either in major or in minor orders, but that he had no right even to convene a clerk before a lay tribunal. To this claim Standish and Veysey replied that the convening of clerks before lay tribunals had been used in England, that it was contrary to no reasonable interpretation of Scripture, and that a papal decree could not stand against the continuous usage of a country.

No English canonist of the middle ages would have contested the theory that the pope's power over spiritual persons

[1] Keilway, *Reports d'ascuns cases*, p. 180 ff.; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 1313, 1314.

[2] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 1315.

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and causes was supreme and unlimited. No English common lawyer would have allowed to spiritual causes all the territory which was claimed for them. Yet, old as was the controversy, the verdict of the judges at Blackfriars is startling in its almost revolutionary violence. They decided that the whole convocation had rendered themselves liable to a *præmunire*, and went on to affirm that a king could hold a parliament without the lords spiritual, since the spiritual lords had no place in the parliament chamber by reason of their spirituality, but only by reason of their temporal possessions. In other words the high court of parliament was essentially a lay tribunal, the legislature essentially a lay legislature, the supreme source of law a fountain of secular waters. The authority which would attach to such an announcement would depend upon the view of the king and the temper of the time. At a subsequent meeting held at Baynard's Castle and attended by the lords spiritual and temporal and by several members of the commons, the cardinal of York knelt before the king and presented the humble apology of the clergy. They had not intended to do anything in derogation of the prerogative of the king, but prayed that the matter might be referred to the pope and his counsel in his court at Rome. Since the pope had only recently declared his mind upon the point, Wolsey's proposal would have meant inevitable defeat for the secular party. "It seems to us," replied the king who had an eye for his own interests, "that Dr. Standish and others of his spiritual counsel have answered you on all points." At this Fox burst out wrathfully: "Sir, I warrant you Dr. Standish will not abide by his opinion at his peril". When the aged Bishop of Winchester spoke thus in the presence of his sovereign, the temper of the younger and more fiery members of convocation may be easily surmised. "What should one poor friar do alone against all the bishops and clergy of England?" cried Standish, and if the poor friar had been left to the tender mercies of the bishops and clergy, he would not improbably have found his way to the Lollards' Tower.

But the course of the debate had accomplished a stage in Henry's education. He had learnt where his prerogative lay and from what quarters he might chiefly expect attack and support. From the bench which exalted the prerogative of the crown, cardinal and archbishop pleaded for an appeal to a foreign

court which would surely decide against the crown's interest. Henry did not wish to drive things to extremity with the Church, but with the assistance of the common-law judges he had made the discovery that he was supreme in England. It was a dictum ascribed to Fyneux, the lord chief justice, that "the prince's prerogative and the subjects' privileges are social felicities together but empty notions asunder";[1] and in a hot altercation with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the chief justice maintained that if at the instance of the clergy a clerk were handed over to the spiritual court for murder or felony, the court had no authority to try the case, but must act according to "the intent and purpose" for which the prisoner had been remitted by the secular judge. In the same spirit Henry declared "Kings of England have never had any superior but God alone. Know well therefore that we will ever maintain the right of our crown and of our temporal jurisdiction." The reference to Rome was disallowed, and Standish was rescued from the clutches of convocation. This, however, was the limit to the triumph of the laity. The bill restricting benefit of clergy never passed into law, and no legislation was founded upon the petition to redress the abuse of mortuary fees. In a letter to the king, apparently written during this autumn session,[2] Wolsey advised a more speedy dissolution of parliament, and dissolved it was on December 22, after a six weeks' session during which it had done much to invite the suspicion of the Church and the hostility of the cardinal. Eight years were destined to elapse before another parliament was summoned to Westminster. CHAP. VIII.

Among the infallible signs of the growing prosperity of England was the increased intercourse of this country with the continent and the number of alien artificers and merchants who now thought it worth while to settle in London. Whatever may be the arguments for restricting alien immigration into a country which is already densely populated, or into a society which has nothing to learn from the immigrant, except the art of living upon starvation wages, these arguments do not apply to the sixteenth century. The whole population of England did not then in all probability much exceed 2,000,000, of whom two-thirds may have been engaged in agricultural pursuits. As

[1] British Museum, Sloane MS. 1523, f. 27.

[2] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 1223.

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there were no trade journals to diffuse information as to the progress of the industrial arts, and as the statute book placed many obstacles in the way of foreign imports, a knowledge of the technical processes in vogue in other lands could most easily be obtained by the immigration of alien artificers. Such an immigration was all the more to be encouraged since England, still mainly engaged in the output of wheat and wool, of cloth and worsteds, had much to learn from the continent in the more refined and delicate branches of industry. "All artificialite," wrote a contemporary priest, "is mostly seen in strangers."[1] The king employed foreign gunners, foreign bankers, foreign musicians and instrument-makers. A Venetian organist delighted his hours of leisure; Italian merchants unrolled their brilliant eastern carpets in the corridors of Greenwich or Richmond, and borrowed money from the king and his court to embark upon their lucrative ventures in the Levant. The provider of the king's instruments of war was a German; the arts of printing and bookbinding, the trade in embroidery, leather, and jewellery, the manufacture of baskets and felt hats, the industry of silk-weaving and the casting of ordnance were largely carried on by alien settlers. In the intelligent and luxurious circle which surrounded the king, the purveyors of rare, curious, and finely wrought goods were always welcome; and as the alien paid a double subsidy, not to speak of occasional poll-taxes, his presence was grateful to the exchequer.

It was otherwise in the country at large and among the craftsmen and apprentices of London. The problem of unemployment had become sufficiently serious to engage the attention of parliament, and it was natural for ignorant men to argue that if an English workman was starving it was because a Frenchman, an Italian, or a Fleming had stolen his work. The foreigner was alternately accused of following the easy occupation of an artisan instead of labouring at the plough or the cart, and of cheating the king's subjects by the fraudulent measures and debased quality of his wares. Stories floated about of insolent words and wanton acts, and swelled the volume of indignation. One day in April, 1516, bills were set upon the door of St. Paul's cathedral and upon that of All Hallows',

[1] Clement Armstrong in Pauli's *Drei volkwirthschaftliche Denkschriften*,

Barking, to the effect that strangers were obtaining much money from the king, and that they bought wools to the undoing of Englishmen. Henry ordered an inquiry to be made in every ward of the city into the handwritings of the prentices in order to discover the perpetrators of the offence, and this measure, vigorously executed and exhibiting the firm intention of the crown to protect the resident alien, seems to have been temporarily successful. CHAP. VIII.

The next spring, however, witnessed a storm. In the days before the circulation of printed matter was wide or rapid, the most powerful engine of agitation was the pulpit. Where a modern political agitator buys a newspaper, organises a meeting, or circulates pamphlets and handbills, his prototype in the sixteenth century would prevail upon some popular preacher to deliver an incendiary sermon before a large and congenial congregation. For the particular purpose of an anti-foreign crusade no assemblage could be more apt than the motley crowd of merchants and shopmen, prentices and bargees, who during the Easter or Whitsuntide vacations crowded round the pulpit of St. Mary Spittal, when the Spittal sermons were preached in the presence of the mayor and aldermen of the city. It remained to find some voice from the pulpit sufficiently potent, strong, and unscrupulous to serve the ends of the agitation, and Standish, the favourite preacher of the court, was approached by a London broker, one John Lincoln, who had made up his mind that the strangers must be taught their place. Standish was too enlightened to accept a proposal which would certainly lead to bloodshed, and possibly involve England in foreign complications, but Dr. Beale, a canon of St. Mary's, felt no such scruples. On the Tuesday of Easter week, 1517—for a holiday was essential—the Spittal congregation listened to a tirade against the foreigner conceived in a spirit which has broken out intermittently through the whole course of English history. After reading "a pitiful bill" or petition, which attributed the increase of poverty to the aliens, Dr. Beale proceeded to incite his hearers to open violence. God had given England to the Englishmen, and "as birds would defend their nest, so ought Englishmen to cherish and defend themselves and to hurt and grieve aliens for the common weal".

A few days later the preacher was taken at his word. On

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April 28 some foreigners were buffeted in the streets and thrown into the canal. Arrests were made by order of the mayor, but nevertheless a rumour spread that this was but the prelude to a larger tragedy, and that on May day the City would rise and slay all the aliens. Wolsey sent for the mayor, and as it was considered dangerous to call out the watch, an order was given on the eve of the fatal day that every Londoner should repair to his own house and keep indoors from nine o'clock that evening till seven o'clock on the following morning. As Alderman Mundy attempted to enforce the order in Cheap, the cry arose of "*Prentices and Clubs*," and the streets rapidly filled with an excited throng of watermen and prentices, carters and priests, drawn from every quarter of the city. The jails were forced, and even Newgate, despite the efforts of the mayor and sheriffs, was compelled to yield up the men who had been imprisoned for the cause. So reinforced, the crowd surged through St. Nicholas's shambles towards the liberty of St. Martin's-le-Grand, one of the principal resorts of the foreign colony. There Sir Thomas More, then serving as under-sheriff of London, made a brave attempt to prevent a breach of the peace. But as the parley was proceeding, the inhabitants of the threatened buildings began to discharge a volley of stones and bats upon the crowd in the street. From that moment the fury of the rioters passed the bounds of control. Sacking and plundering, they wreaked their vengeance upon St. Martin's, and this accomplished, streamed off to rifle the strangers' quarters in Cornhill and Whitechapel. The king's French secretary, Meautis, barely escaped with his life; but the Italian merchants were too well armed to be pillaged with impunity.

Meanwhile, largely owing to the measures of the cardinal, the forces of order were being rallied. Wolsey strengthened his house with men and ordnance; the lieutenant of the Tower shot some rounds of artillery into the streets, and as about three o'clock on May morning the rioters were dispersing to bed, they were met by a force under the command of the mayor and the aldermen. The prentices, who were eager enough to loot a foreigner's house or to club a peaceful Flemish merchant, were not equipped for an encounter with harnessed men; and such as could not make good their escape then and there, were taken and committed to prison. Of these thirteen were

tried upon a far-fetched charge of high treason, found guilty, and adjudged to die, and for some time the city gates were gruesomely decorated with gibbets and quarters. But when it became clear that the spirit had been taken out of the revolt, Henry had no further interest in a policy of terror. With an insight into popular feeling which never deserted him, he determined to make his clemency and reconciliation as impressive as his vengeance. Seated in Westminster Hall in the midst of his council and in the presence of an immense concourse of spectators, he ordered the prisoners of "Evil May day" to be brought before him with their halters round their necks, as if to receive the last penalty of the law, and as the haggard band of men and women cried, "Mercy, gracious lord, mercy," the king at the request of the cardinal and his lords told them that they were pardoned. A sudden howl of delight issued simultaneously from 400 throats. The poor fellows tore their halters from their necks and tossed them to the rafters. It was a spectacle never to be forgotten by the Londoner who saw it, but hardly calculated to efface the impression of those gloomy days when Surrey's harnessed men were keeping the streets and the executioner was busy with his hateful work. The rage against the foreigners was all the greater since they had not lost a life in the fray; but though it went on simmering, the executive was too drastic and too wary to be defied; and the subsidy rolls of 1540-1 suggest the inference that one-third of the London population at that date consisted of alien artisans.[1] CHAP. VIII.

The credit for the prompt suppression of the May day riots rests with Wolsey, who was never unequal to an emergency. The cardinal was now the mainspring of the administration as well as the principal coadjutor of the king in the conduct of foreign affairs; and the art of government was then, as throughout the middle ages, conceived to consist rather in the accurate administration of existing laws than in the fabrication of new ones. A scientific administration was out of the question, since there was no trained administrative class nor continuous accumulation of political knowledge; and the execution of the laws depended on the activity and goodwill of the county justices

[1] William Page, *Denizations and Nationalizations of Aliens in England*, intr., p. xxiii.; R. E. G. Kirk, *Returns of Aliens dwelling in the City and Suburbs of London*, i., 19-67.

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prompted by the intermittent monitions of the assize judges. The action of so miscellaneous a body was as irregular as their supervision was imperfect; but there was no lack of deference to the central authority. Indeed, as the Tudor rule became more and more firmly established, the king's government was regarded as a kind of administrative providence, set to guide, to regulate, and to instruct all the manifold energies of the nation. Every description of local and of municipal difficulty came to be referred to the king's council; and as conciliar government extended its functions, a change came over the temper in which affairs were handled. In the numerous arbitrations and decisions of the council the technicalities of the common law were overpowered by considerations of public policy, equity, and common sense; and even masters of the common law, such as Fyneux, the chief justice, and St. Germain, the legal writer, were affected by the momentum of the government. Like Bacon, whose intellectual ancestors they are, they bring their tough old rules to the test of reason and public policy.

Wolsey's administration was conceived in a mould at once strict and liberal. He was strict to curb any laxity in the employment of public funds, and incurred some unpopularity in doing so. He sent the Earl of Northumberland to the Fleet, and summoned Lord Hastings and Sir Richard Sacheverell to the Star-chamber, for keeping liveried serving-men in defiance of the law.[1] At the same time he took in hand the enforcement, popular with the common folk, but viewed with legitimate distrust by the great proprietors, of the statutes against depopulating enclosures. As the problem was complex and thorny, the facts undetermined or disputed, royal commissioners were appointed in 1517 and 1518 to inquire into the demolition of villages and houses, the conversion of arable into pasture, and the imparking of land for sporting purposes. There is every reason to suppose that the investigation was intended to be serious, searching, and impartial; and though it may be admitted that the returns (preserved for twenty-two counties) are incomplete, that here and there juries may have been too timid to tell the whole truth, and here and there a commission may have been overlenient to its friends, still the report of this great inquisition,

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, ii., 2018, 4675.

presenting as it does a conspectus of the enclosure movement from 1488 to 1518, throws most valuable light on the character and extent of the agrarian disturbance, and on the rural economy in England, during the first thirty years of Tudor rule.[2]

The forces which were making for enclosure were far too strong to be arrested by the outcries of the poor or the prohibition of the legislature. The returns of Wolsey's commission show that the average rental value of enclosed arable exceeded the average rental value of open arable by 31 per cent., and that the rental value of land enclosed to pasture exceeded the rental value of land enclosed to arable by 27 per cent. If then the average profits of enclosed pasturage were more than double the profits of open arable, it was clear that the system of champaign farming was ultimately doomed to disappear. Legislation might arrest, and there is reason to think that in some quarters it did arrest, the improving zeal of the less audacious, the less energetic, or the more scrupulous landlord. The enclosures on the estates of the Abbot of Abingdon, which had been numerous in the period preceding the act of 1488, are intermitted in the following decade, and it is open to argue that but for the action of the legislature the process of conversion would have been speedier than it actually proved to be. Yet the returns of the commission show that the letter of the law had been widely disregarded in all classes of the landowning community. Abbots and barons, squires and tenant-farmers, even the humble commoners of the village had enclosed both for arable and pasture in defiance of the acts. In Northamptonshire the Abbot of Peterborough had enclosed hard on 1,000 acres, and evicted 100 tenants. In Norfolk one prior enclosed 192, another 130, a third 60 acres. The Abbot of Evesham converts 260 acres of arable into pasture, and the Oxfordshire houses of Rewley and St. Frideswide's are numbered among the transgressors. Imparking for sporting purposes seems to have been the perquisite of the laity, and the religious houses are thus acquitted of the worst offence against the poor. Yet in other respects the abbot, the prior, or the college bursar would in many places be as stringent as the squire who put down a plough to embark on the wool-trade or forced a well-to-do

[1] I. S. Leadam, *The Domesday of Enclosures.*

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bondman to pay an exorbitant price for his charter of emancipation. Rents were often as high and evictions as pitiless upon Church lands as upon lay lands. In some counties there is direct evidence to show that the ecclesiastical landlord exacted higher rents both for arable and pasture than his lay neighbour.

Yet widely scattered as were the enclosures, and the encroachments through the country, the total area affected by the movement was as yet comparatively insignificant. In the northern counties it had hardly begun to make itself felt, and in the three Ridings of Yorkshire only 6,678½ acres had been enclosed, of which 2,670 were enclosed for sport. Even in the midlands, where the agricultural revolution had made most way, the old champaign farming with its complex and ungainful traditions was still dominant.

Norfolk was an enclosing county, but yet here only seventy-six houses in the county are reported as having been destroyed, while the 10,000 acres of enclosure represent less than one per cent. of the area reported on. In Northamptonshire, another enclosing county, 8,638 acres had been enclosed, and 7,097 engrossed, or thrown into larger farms. In Oxfordshire, reckoned next to Middlesex the richest county in England, 8,570 acres had been enclosed, and 11,557 engrossed, or less than one-twenty-third part of the total acreage of the county. In Berkshire the enclosures amounted to 9,000 acres, or less than two per cent. of the amount returned. So great an invasion of private rights as the unlicensed imparking of 623 acres at Thornbury by the Duke of Buckingham was exceptional. For the most part land was nibbled rather than devoured in large mouthfuls. Still the nibbling was persistent and pervasive. On the outskirts of London hedges were beginning to seam the downs of Hackney. A yeoman had enclosed eleven acres on Blackheath, another yeoman six acres in the Hyde; 100 acres had been enclosed in London Field by the prior of St. Mary's without Bishopsgate. Where the land was already rich and profitable, the economic motive for change was reduced, and the old conditions would survive, as they survived in the rich red loam in the region of Banbury. But wherever the arable was poor, or the breed of sheep famous, or the temptations to sport peculiarly urgent, greed was likely to vanquish legality. Among the moors of Yorkshire, and in the

rough forest ground of Hampshire, the enclosures were mainly for sport; in the flats of Northamptonshire for pasture; in the comfortable Berkshire lowlands for arable. But the strength of economic motives was felt in very varying degrees in different parts of the country; and the low traditional rents paid for enclosed pasture to the landowners of Berkshire and Oxfordshire, when compared with the high figures obtained by the farming owners in Warwickshire and Northamptonshire, show the tenacity of custom and the sporadic influence of competitive principles. CHAP. VIII.

Still it would have been futile to attempt to enforce the strict letter of a law which was disobeyed in every county and by members of every grade in the landowning class. A few suits were instituted in 1518 for half profits against crown-tenants guilty of enclosure, but these were frequently stayed upon the defendant entering into recognisances to restore the houses which he had permitted to decay, and to reconvert the pasture into arable. On July 12 a decree was issued in chancery that enclosures and ditches made since 1485 were to be demolished upon pain of a fine of £100, unless evidence was forthcoming that they were beneficial to the commonwealth, and not contrary to the statute. An appeal to expediency once admitted, the encloser might breathe more freely. Squires would show how the mere timber in their hedgerows had benefited the country-folk in a woodless district; how if a house had fallen here, another had been built there; and how from an ampler purse they had been able to increase the amenities of the parish church. Wolsey, in spite of repeated efforts in 1520, 1526, and 1528, was unable to stop a movement which persevered through the whole of the sixteenth century, and filled contemporary literature with laments. Endeavouring to enforce the statutes, he increased his unpopularity with the rich, and failing to enforce them, he reaped less than his share of the gratitude from the poor.

It was not only in the matter of the enclosures that Wolsey showed his concern for the interest of the people. Even Skelton the satirist, who is unsparing in his attacks upon the pride, ignorance, and self-seeking of the cardinal, acknowledged that as a judge in the causes of the poor Wolsey did good work. He contrived expeditious, informal, and cheap tribunals to

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hear their complaints. No noble could browbeat him. He treated rank and wealth with royal, reckless disdain. His favour with the king, his despatch in business, his fearlessness, his office of chancellor giving him control over the judicial system of the country, were so many guarantees that the humble man would be fairly tried. Wolsey was also the friend of good letters. The compliments of Erasmus, who compares him to Ptolemy Philadelphus for his patronage of learning and collection of books, may be discounted, for Erasmus was given to hyperbole, and Wolsey was profuse in praise of Erasmus. But no contemporary of Henry, of Fox, or of Fisher could be blind to the reputation conferred by munificent benefactions to the cause of learning, and Wolsey determined to be a founder of colleges. With this among other objects in view, he obtained in August, 1518, a bull permitting him to visit the monasteries.

Meanwhile the Latin reading world had been thrilled and somewhat confounded by the appearance of a book written from within official circles and framed in obvious imitation of Plato's *Republic*, but containing under the most delicate literary tracery a core of radicalism as audacious as anything which had come from Abelard or Marsiglio. More's *Utopia* was published in 1516 and professed to be an account of a conversation held by him and his friend Peter Giles with a certain Raphael Hythlodaie, scholar and traveller, on the occasion of an embassy to the Low Countries which More had recently undertaken in company with Tunstall. Hythlodaie describes his travels, and then after some striking criticisms have been passed on the folly of Henry's French wars and on the defects of English society, the voyager is drawn on to describe an ideal commonalty, the island of Utopia, whose wise and godly ordinances had excited his admiration. Here there was no poverty; no religious persecution, save that a belief in the immortality of the soul and a future state of rewards and punishments was deemed essential to good citizenship; no coinage; none of the glaring evils which afflicted European society. Men were not hanged for the theft of a sheep; there were no ravening bands of wastrels, the refuse of the wars, nor of idle serving-men nor of the homeless victims of enclosure. There were few laws and no lawyers. The Utopians cared nothing for counterfeit pleasures, such as fine clothes, gems, or ancestral honours. Gambling they con-

demned, and hunting they regarded as unfit for free men, "the lowest, vilest, and most abject part of butchery". Counting the pleasures of the mind "the chiefest and most principal of all," they directed their studies to rational ends, such as medicine, and would have nothing to say to astrology or formal logic, the will-o'-the-wisps of the medieval intellect.

The book is full of suggestions, tentative, hardly serious, yet indicative of the questioning spirit before which all settled institutions appear whimsical and irrational. The whole catholic world had for centuries regarded a male priesthood as alone possible: in Utopia women were priests. The Church had condemned suicide: in Utopia it was encouraged in cases of painful and hopeless disease. Old-world agriculturists accepted in a spirit of tame submission a barren untimbered soil: the Utopians pluck up whole woods and transplant them. The institution of monasticism was based on the theory that the path to holiness lay through the renunciation of the world and the flesh: the Utopians on the contrary judged it extreme madness "to follow sharp and painful virtue, and not only to banish the pleasure of life, but also willingly to suffer grief without any hope of profit thereof". The old world was content with the distinction between town and country: in Utopia every burgher took his turn at agriculture, and every agriculturist took his turn of city life. An English town in the sixteenth century was malodorous and pestilential: in Amaurote, the capital of Utopia, on the other hand, the streets were commodious, handsome, and broad; "the houses commonly builded after a gorgeous and gallant sort with three storeys one over another, and large gardens behind them, full of all manner of fruit, herbs, and flowers, so pleasant and well furnished and so finely kept that I never saw anything more fruitful nor better trimmed in any place". In the old world, again, a large part of society consisted of drones: in Utopia no one was idle, and consequently six hours of toil provided the community with all the necessaries and amenities of life. Again, whereas in the old world illiteracy was the rule, in Utopia every child received an education, and all the better part of the people, both men and women, bestowed their leisure hours upon learning. In Utopia the priests are of "exceeding holiness and therefore very good, chosen as the other magistrates be, by secret voices for the

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avoiding of strife". No image of any God is seen in the churches, so that every man may be free to conceive God under what likeness or similitude he may. The prayers are selected so as not to offend the conscience of any sect of worshippers; the religion is theistic. The concluding passage of Hythlodaie's story is a splendid and touching burst of eloquence on the injustice of a system which heaps luxuries on the idle rich, and makes no "gentle provision" for the poor. In all the commonwealths of the old world Hythlodaie could perceive nothing but a "conspiracy of rich men procuring their own commodities under the name and title of commonwealths". From such crying injustice the Utopians were preserved by their system of communism.

The author of this delightful and humane treatise was compelled by the harsh logic of fate to violate some of the beautiful canons which he had laid down for Utopia; to be an uncompromising champion of orthodoxy, a vehement persecutor of heretics, a passionate and prolix controversialist. The *Utopia* became a text-book among the rebellious peasantry of Germany; and no treatise is better calculated to nourish the heart of a radical. But its doctrine of religious toleration was an agreeable dream, shattered by the first contact with the realities of life. In the world of fact unity was the one goal, force the only way; and for things too sacred and too passionate for compromise, men like Sir Thomas More were willing to slay and to die.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BALANCE OF POWER.

CHARLES V., the new emperor, was a lad of nineteen, preternaturally grave and wary, and endowed with a tough persistency of character which served him well in all the vicissitudes of life. He had inherited the Low Countries, Naples, and Sardinia, the archduchy of Austria, Spain and its possessions beyond the sea, and he was now by election German King, and head of the Holy Roman empire. The alliances of his house spread into the most distant corners of Europe. One sister was married to the King of Hungary, another to the King of Denmark, a third to the King of Portugal. It cannot be wondered that the King of France was nervous when he contemplated this great system of territories, offices, and alliances, which confronted the borders of his kingdom. Wherever he turned he found a rival, in the Pyrenees, on the Flemish frontier, in the plains of Italy. Even had there been no question of historic claims and counterclaims, mere equality of power would have engendered conflict; but the occasions and pretexts for quarrel had been hoarded in the rival chancelleries, ready for use when the time came. The French still lusted after Naples, to which Francis had claims under the will of the last of the Angevin line; the emperor coveted Milan as an escheat and wished to expel the French from Italy. Charles had a claim to the Duchy of Burgundy, and cherished a secret hope that he might recover the great inheritance which had been lost by the rashness of his famous namesake. Navarre was still held by Spain despite the promise made at Noyon that Henri d'Albret, the French king's client, should be restored to his throne. All Europe was conscious of these living seeds of discord. But great as were the issues of the impending struggle, they would not, even if realised, have

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weighed against an hour of selfish pleasure with the heartless profligate who sat upon the throne of France.

England had pledged herself to peace and to a French marriage for the Lady Mary, and French pensions and payments made the alliance acceptable to Henry and Wolsey. But if, and whenever, war should break out between Charles and Francis, it was almost certain that England would range herself upon the imperialist side; the French were unpopular both with nobles and people, the trade connexion with Flanders was too valuable to be lightly broken, and the influence of Queen Catharine would certainly be thrown upon her nephew's side. To Charles, again, with his empty purse, his large liabilities, his dependence upon Channel voyages when he wished to pass from Flanders to Spain, English friendship and co-operation were worth a serious effort. His real strength was by no means so great as it appeared to be. The several parts of his vast empire were sundered from one another by position, by race, by historic tradition. The Fleming was hated in Spain; the Spaniard was hated in Germany; between the German and the Neapolitan there was not a shred of sympathy or similitude. Everywhere he was assailed by grave problems. In Germany he was called upon to reform a mediæval and unworkable constitution, and to deal with a religious upheaval which seemed to menace the whole fabric of society. If he proceeded to Spain, it was not unlikely that he would lose Naples; if he tarried in Italy, it was not unlikely that he would lose Spain. He was not rich; he was forced by geography to act upon exterior lines against a concentrated power; he could not count upon a large army; his authority was yet young and unsettled. The English alliance was a necessary insurance.

Neither Wolsey nor Henry would scruple to throw over the French at the call of convenience, and even as early as the summer of 1519 the hand of Mary, already solemnly pledged to the dauphin, was secretly offered by Wolsey to Charles. If the overture bore no immediate fruit, it was because Charles was not yet inclined to turn his back upon the prospect of a lucrative marriage in Portugal, and Wolsey was not yet prepared to shatter the fabric of universal peace, so sumptuously proclaimed and glorified. For the moment public attention was

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concentrated upon the preparations for a long-promised meeting of Henry and Francis upon French soil. Yet in May, a month before the interview, Charles slipped over to England to make sure that nothing serious should be transacted upon the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Young as he was, the emperor knew something of the human heart. He assigned Wolsey a pension of 7,000 ducats and promised his aid at the next papal vacancy; and having learnt by unmistakable tokens, as he rode from Dover to Canterbury, in what direction the breeze of popular favour blew, he arranged to meet Henry once more when the splendour of the French interview should be overpast. The pageantry of that famous interview, the festivities protracted for twenty days to June 24, the tournaments and pavilions, the gorgeous retinues and costly banquets, advertised the wealth of two rival nations and riveted the attention of contemporaries. Yet the friendship between Francis and Henry was as flimsy as the tinsel of gold and silver which glistened under the June sky in that insipid plain of Picardy. On the 24th the two monarchs parted, and on July 5 Henry was by appointment at Gravelines in the presence of Charles. There the defensive alliance between England and the empire was confirmed; and lest suspicion should be generated in Paris, Francis was informed that Charles had made proposals for an English marriage and an invasion of France, but that Henry had dissuaded him from war.

No diplomacy, however adroit, could for long avert the appeal to force. Even while Charles was conferring with Henry at Gravelines, Spain was in a blaze of rebellion, and the revolt in Spain was the opportunity of France. It was immediately noised abroad that Francis would cross the Alps, and once in Italy, with the powerful French artillery behind him, what might not Francis effect? At the best he would make himself master of Naples, at the worst he would dictate a policy to the curia. Henry sent word that he trusted that his brother would not go south without urgent cause, and that the affairs of Italy were well established. But if Francis did not at once commit himself to an Italian expedition it was not out of deference to fraternal advice. The clearest dictates of common sense would lead him to provoke, not to initiate, an attack, since England was bound by treaty to side against the aggressor.

CHAP. IX. Such provocation was given, but in a way scarcely calculated to raise a doubt as to the complicity of the French king. French generals were sent into Navarre to restore Henri d'Albret; while at the same time Robert de la Marck, lord of Sedan and Bouillon, declared war upon the emperor, and with a host of adventurers officered by Frenchmen made a raid into imperial territory. Francis filled the air with protestations of innocence. He was not responsible; no one was more pacific; to show his good-will he was urging the Scots to sue for peace with England; that Henry's eyes might be open he revealed the fact that the curia had been invited to prepare a dispensation for the marriage of Charles to a Portuguese princess. No one believed him, but neither Charles nor Henry were ready for instant war.

Henry and Wolsey proposed that both monarchs should submit their claims to English mediation. To Charles such a proposal was not unwelcome, and he consented to accept an arbitrament which pledged him to nothing but politic delay. Francis proclaimed that he had an army ready, such as he could not disband save at great inconvenience; but to have declined the English proposal after it had been accepted by his rival would have been equivalent to a confession that France had no case. "In this controversy," wrote Wolsey to his master, "between these two princes, it shall be marvellous great praise and honour to your grace so by your high wisdom and authority to pass between them and stay them both that ye be not by their contention and variance brought into war." The avoidance of a continental war in which England had no substantial interest was an object at once honourable and politic, and if Wolsey had consistently and courageously pursued it, he would have taken rank among the greatest of our statesmen. But months before the conference was opened in Calais, Charles was informed that under colour of a mediation Wolsey intended to contrive a stricter union with the empire.

Assuming that England was pledged to engage in a continental war on behalf of the emperor, there were many reasons why Wolsey should desire to postpone the conflict. The country was not ready to fight; the king, the cardinal, and many English councillors derived pensions and payments from France which would cease upon the outbreak of hostilities unless compensa-

tion were provided from the imperial treasury. The disturbances in Spain would not be quieted until Charles had visited the kingdom, and Spain must be pacified before open war was declared on Francis. It was therefore the English plan that Charles should defend himself for the moment against French invasions with as little expense as possible, and that Wolsey should proceed to Calais, nominally to compose the grievances of both parties, but really to treat with Charles for a joint invasion of France and to secure a truce under cover of which Charles might proceed to Spain, leaving the Low Countries under Henry's protection during his absence. Then when Spain was quieted, a great league might be formed for the humiliation of the common enemy. The friendship and co-operation of Leo X. were already secured. He invested the emperor with the Kingdom of Naples, sent an army to resist French projects in Lombardy, and told Clerk, the English agent in Rome, that he would spend his blood to drive the French from Italy.

The conference opened at Calais on August 4, and the old seaport town has never witnessed a more solemn farce. While imperial troops were taking Pont-à-Mousson and investing Tournay, the diplomatists were solemnly rehearsing their immense, impossible, and archaic claims to the cardinal, who had already advised his sovereign to get ready 6,000 archers against the time that he should have concluded his business with the emperor. Englishmen, Frenchmen, and imperialists well knew how the play would end, and were prepared to adjust the speed of their movements to the news which came from the stricken field. Gattinara, the imperial chancellor, spoke of the seven reasons for peace as the seven deadly sins and of the ten reasons for war as the ten commandments. At the English court men were canvassing the names of possible commanders; the plans of possible campaigns. Zeal mounted fast and high. The king excogitated "a secret device" of his own and transmitted it for the consideration of his pacific minister. It was nothing less than the sudden destruction of the French navy by the combined fleets of the empire and of England, "a high and great enterprise if it may thus by wisdom and good policy be brought to pass".

The most substantial and important part of Wolsey's task abroad was not the adjustment of implacable discords, but the

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settlement of the terms of the imperial alliance. He had to extract the promise of an indemnity for the loss of the French payments, to settle Mary's dower, to draft the military programme of the coalition. These points were discussed at a separate meeting with the emperor and his councillors at Bruges. Returning to Calais on August 29, Wolsey resumed the *rôle* of an arbiter, and attempted to quiet the suspicions of the French. His task was complicated by the fact that warlike operations were proceeding in Navarre, in Italy, in Hainault and West Flanders. At length the scheme of a truce was propounded, which compelled the belligerents to recall their armies, and to submit the fate of the fortresses recently captured to the arbitration of Henry. But in September Bonnivet surprised Fuenterrabia, and Francis would listen to no counsels involving the surrender of so brilliant a prize. The negotiations for the truce broke down, and on November 24 Wolsey was compelled to sign the league, the articles of which had been drafted at Bruges in August. It was agreed that if Francis did not conclude peace with the emperor, Henry should declare war upon him on Charles's arrival in England, that the Lady Mary should be married to Charles, and that in the spring of 1523 the two sovereigns should jointly invade France, each contributing to the enterprise a land army of 40,000 horse and foot, as well as a fleet to harry the coast. A veil of piety was thrown over a scheme of conquest. The pope, whose task it would be to grant the dispensation for the marriage of the royal cousins, was included in the league, and Charles and Henry bound themselves to put down heresy, and to reform spiritual abuses in such lands as they might conquer from France. A blaze of triumph surrounded the completion of negotiations, whose full duplicity was candidly revealed to the sympathetic ears of the pope, for the day after the signature of the treaty the news came to Calais that the French had been driven out of Milan, while on November 27 the imperialists captured Tournay.

In all this complicated business the cardinal had displayed the qualities of his abundant nature. He had been tenacious, proud, laborious, never hesitating for a lie, full of varied resource. A perfect diplomatist he never was nor became, for he was liable to storms of anger, whose devastations it needed all his diligence to repair. He attempted to bully Charles,

and found not compliance but a temper as proud and unyielding as his own. That he helped to commit his country to a war of ambition contrary to the dictates of plain common-sense is a comment upon his statesmanship, but should not detract from his reputation as an adroit and masterful dealer with men. Wolsey knew well that a war with France would bring the light levies of Scotland over the borders, and that it would involve the suspension of the vigorous policy which Surrey was inaugurating in Ireland. From Calais he wrote to the king to applaud the appointment of a cheap Irish deputy, who, unlike Surrey, would make no demands upon the home exchequer. And yet large and far-reaching schemes both for Ireland and England had been under the consideration of the council: for Ireland the reform of the land system, the consolidation of the Irish sees, that they might be made wealthier and therefore more acceptable to Englishmen, the reduction of the wild Irishry to a more perfect obedience under the crown; for England the reform of the exchequer, the employment of vagabonds, the amelioration of justice. All these plans had now to be relegated to a distant future. CHAP. IX.

Wolsey's apologists have argued that the incalculable impetuosity of the king overmastered the more prudent judgment of his adviser; but this is not borne out by the evidence. On the other hand, it has been urged that the cardinal's course was affected by the fact that, while both Charles and Francis promised him the papacy, it was known that Charles was capable, and that Francis was incapable of controlling the decision of the conclave. That may have been a factor in the result, but hardly the decisive factor. Wolsey was rapacious, and every potentate who negotiated with England traded upon his rapacity. But Wolsey's choice had been made before it was known that Leo's end was imminent, and while there was no near prospect of a vacancy. He had entered upon the business full of suspicion of the good faith, of the untried power of Charles. But he had seen that power consolidating itself under his eyes; and at Bruges he professed himself convinced of the good faith also. By treaty England was bound to side with Charles, for he had been the attacked, not the attacking party; but Wolsey was not influenced by treaty obligations. He saw in the situation an occasion for crushing the ambitions

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of France, humbling the national rival, and exalting the power and prestige of his master. He believed that he was on the side of victory; he professed that he was on the side of holiness; he had laboured, not perhaps in vain, that victory and holiness should not be associated with any pecuniary sacrifice for Henry, for himself, or for his friends. His work received repeated and cordial approval from the king.

Time had robbed the hero of the holy war of his youthful ingenuousness, but had added to the fame of his learning and orthodoxy. Erasmus, in a letter written in May, 1519, speaks of a disputation with a theologian in which Henry had defended the practice of mental and extemporary prayer, and proceeds to laud the king's fidelity to the marriage vow and his efforts to advance learning among the clergy.[1] In the storm of doctrinal unrest which was now blowing strong from Germany, king and cardinal championed the old orthodox cause. At Wolsey's suggestion Henry took up his pen to refute Luther's treatise *On the Babylonish Captivity of the Church.* When the pope's bull and brief commanding Luther's works to be publicly burnt was announced to him in April, 1521, Henry said "that it was very joyous to have these tidings from the pope's holiness at such time as he had taken upon him the defence of Christ's Church with his pen afore the receipt of the said tidings," and asked Wolsey to arrange that all such as were appointed to examine Luther's books should "be congregated together for his highness' perceiving".[2] In all the dioceses of England a search was ordered for Lutheran pamphlets and books. On May 12 there was a solemn burning of books in St. Paul's churchyard, accompanied by a denunciatory sermon from the Bishop of Rochester, in the presence of the cardinal and the accredited representatives of the papacy and the empire. In the diocese of Lincoln the old persecution of the Wycliffites broke out afresh, and while four persons were committed to the secular arm to be burnt as relapsed heretics, fifty were compelled to make public abjuration. Some had been heard to recite the ten commandments in English in their houses; others had spoken against images and pilgrimages, or denied the corporal presence; others had circulated the Gospels of St.

[1] *Erasmi Epp.*, vi., 12; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iii., 226.
[2] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, 1233.

Mark and St. Matthew in English. The old protestantism, which ever since Wycliffe's day had inspired many a humble brain and heart in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, and Oxfordshire, was now for the first time making alliance with the new theology from Germany. But to the royal controversialist the honest doubt, the ardent unbookish imaginings, the crude deliverances of peasant rationalists were things unrealised. It was his business to earn the applause of the learned. CHAP. IX.

Towards the end of August the book was completed and despatched to Rome, with a dedicatory epistle and a Latin couplet written in Henry's own hand. "His holiness," reported Clerk, the English envoy, "gave the book a great commendation, and said there was therein much wit and clerkly conveyance, and how that there were many clerks who had written in the matter but this book should seem to pass all theirs." In a more lyrical strain Campeggio wrote to Wolsey that he was "overcome with joy at reading the King's golden book," and that it seemed to be inspired more "by an angelic and celestial than by a human spirit".[1] On October 11 the pope, in full consistory, conferred upon the king the title of *Fidei Defensor* as a reward for the example which he had shown to all Christian princes.

Mountjoy told Erasmus that Henry was the real author of the *Assertio septem Sacramentorum*, and there is nothing intrinsically improbable in the statement. The argument, fortified by well-worn citations from the Scriptures and the Latin fathers, such as any religious manual might supply, never travels beyond the beaten highway of orthodox polemic. Henry neither understood Luther nor cared to understand him. For him it was sufficient to point out that a single insignificant friar, *fraterculus*, *doctorculus*, *sanctulus*, *eruditulus*, had challenged the majestic tribunal of the saints, the fathers, and the popes. "If indulgences are impostures then all the popes are impostors, and it is easier to believe that one little friar is a diseased sheep than that all the popes of old were perfidious shepherds." Sir Thomas More, who may have supplied Henry with his single joke, thought that the king had gone too far in asserting divine institution for the primacy of the papal see, but the author

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iii., 1574, 1592.

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declined to attenuate his argument. The most edifying rhetoric in the treatise is evoked by the defence of the sacrament of marriage. "The insipid water of concupiscence," observes the Catholic champion, "is turned by the hidden grace of God unto wine of the finest flavour. Whom God has joined together, let no man put asunder. O wonderful word such as no man could have uttered save the Word which was made flesh! . . . Who does not tremble when he considers how he should deal with his wife, for not only is he bound to love her, but so to live with her that he may return her to God pure and without stain, when God who gave, shall demand his own again." The indissolubility of marriage was a theme familiar to Henry. In 1519 he had administered to his sister Margaret monitions, weighty and not unneeded, upon the whole duty of a wife.

While this clumsy piece of polemical metal was still upon the anvil, Henry's attention was attracted to some revelations gravely compromising the loyalty of the high constable of England, Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham. Alike by reason of his connexions, his wealth, and his offices, Buckingham was one of the most powerful noblemen in the kingdom. Through his father he was descended from Thomas of Woodstock, sixth son of Edward III., while his mother was Catharine Woodville, the sister of Edward IV.'s queen and the great aunt of the reigning sovereign. His wife was the daughter of Henry Earl of Northumberland. His only son, Henry, had married the daughter of Margaret Countess of Salisbury; his eldest daughter was the wife of Thomas Duke of Norfolk; two other daughters had married into the powerful house of Neville. As early as 1503, when Henry VII. was lying ill, people had talked of Buckingham as a possible successor to the throne. "He was a noble man," they said, "and would be a royal ruler"; and the pretensions of the house of Stafford were backed by lavish entertainment and great possessions. Buckingham, however, was not made to be a leader of revolt. He had rendered himself odious to his tenantry by his ruthless evictions for sport, and he had none of the steadiness of purpose which is even more effectual than popularity. In common with other members of his class he hated Wolsey as an upstart, and openly professed his dislike of the French alliance which was Wolsey's handiwork. Vergil, who bore no love to the cardinal, recounts how

on one occasion, when Buckingham was holding up a basin for the king to wash in, he purposely spilt some water into Wolsey's shoes; and late in 1520 or early in 1521 it came to Wolsey's ears that in "his fumes and displeasures" the duke railed not only against the cardinal but also against the king. An angry word of warning apprised the court that Buckingham had fallen out of favour, and enemies pressed forward to complete his ruin.

The duke's chancellor, Robert Gilbert, seems to have been the leader of the treacherous pack. He deposed that he had heard the duke say that my lord cardinal was an idolater, "taking counsel of a spirit how he might continue to have the king's favour," and that he ministered to the king's vices, a charge which was repeated seven years afterwards. The duke had complained in Gilbert's hearing that he had done as good service as any man and was not rewarded, and that the king gave fees and offices to boys rather than to noblemen. He had grudged that the Earl of Warwick was put to death, saying that God would punish it by not suffering the king's issue to prosper, that as for himself he would wait for a more convenient time, but that it would be well if the nobles would "make their mind together," so unkindly were they handled, and so few of them were content. In 1519 Henry had reproved Sir William Bulmer in the Star-chamber for exchanging the royal service for that of Buckingham. Gilbert deposed to a regular scheme for suborning the king's guards by presents of gold and silver cloth, and said that the duke had on several occasions sent him to the king to obtain licence to retain men in the western counties and to transport arms and habiliments into Wales. The duke's surveyor, Charles Knyvet, who had been recently dismissed from his post, told of an angry speech three years back which implied that, rather than go to the Tower, Buckingham would be prepared to stab the king. Another informer was John Delacourt, the duke's chaplain. His story was that on April 24, 1513, the duke had sent him from Thornbury to Hinton in Somerset to consult one Nicholas Hopkins, a Carthusian monk, who pretended to have knowledge of future events. Hopkins bade Delacourt inform his master that he "should have all, and that he should endeavour to obtain the love of the community," and afterwards told the duke

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that the king should have no male issue of his body, and that he, Buckingham, should be King of England: information productive of ducal largesse both to the prophet and to his priory. Puffed up with these tidings, Buckingham had said to Ralph Neville Earl of Westmorland on February 20, 1514, that if anything but good should happen to the king, he, Edward Stafford, was next in succession to the crown.[1]

Henry personally examined the accusers, and having satisfied himself that the charges were true gave orders for Buckingham's arrest. On April 8, 1521, Buckingham, unconscious of his danger, was summoned from Thornbury, his Gloucestershire home, to London. There he was arrested and conveyed to the Tower, where his accusers were already confined. On May 13 the prisoner was brought into Westminster Hall to be tried by his peers. The indictment, resting as it did upon the depositions of three discontented servants and ranging over a period of ten years, would carry little weight with judges versed in scientific canons of evidence, but in a Tudor law court it was sufficient to secure a conviction. Chief Justice Fyneux ruled, that while an accomplished act was essential to a felony, words might be sufficient evidence of treason. Buckingham was allowed no counsel, and could do nothing but assert with all the eloquence at his command that the charges were false, and forged to bring him to his death. But the peers knew well that private inclinations must weigh as a feather against the king's opinion, and understanding what was expected of them reluctantly brought in the verdict of guilty. "You have said, my lord," spoke the condemned man to Norfolk, "as a traitor should be spoken to, but I was never one," and even upon the testimony of witnesses it is doubtful whether there was more against him than some rash words and some idle hopes. His fate stirred deep sympathy, and fragments of his last speech were repeated in distant counties: "An he had not offended no more unto God than he had unto the crown, he should die as true man as ever there was in the world". Yet, when Buckingham's head fell upon Tower green, the nobility of England had learnt a lesson which was none the less potent for being rooted in an act of cowardly injustice, that

[1] A convenient summary of the depositions is given in *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iii., 1284.

reason of state is paramount above all things, can admit no risky counsels of clemency, and must strike hard on the faintest breath of suspicion. Others besides Buckingham had been involved. The Countess of Salisbury was his mother-in-law and a daughter of George Duke of Clarence, but for the present it was decided to spare her "in consequence of her high birth and virtues". Abergavenny and Montagu escaped with a short imprisonment and a forfeit. One head was enough for the moment to prove that no one could speculate with impunity upon the succession to the crown, or advert to the series of malignant calamities which had carried off no less than five of Queen Catharine's children. CHAP. IX.

The secret league against France had been framed on November 24, 1521; but Leo X. did not live to learn of its conclusion: he died on December 1. As the imperialists had driven the French from Milan, and were for the time masters of Italy and of the conclave, it remained to see whether Charles would fulfil his pledge to make Wolsey pope. "It is the king's earnest desire," wrote Bernard de Mesa to the emperor, "that Wolsey should have the papacy, and he is anxious beyond what I can express that your majesty should concur in this."[1] Wolsey himself, though not oversanguine, did not despair of success, provided that no scruples were felt in the application of violent pressure upon the conclave. The Bishop of Badajoz reported to his master on the 24th, that Wolsey had made to him the astounding proposition that "your majesty should move the imperial troops now in Italy to Rome, and if the cardinals could not be induced by good offers to elect him, they should be prevented by force from electing an adherent of the French party to the destruction of Naples and Sicily, and consequently of all Christendom. All these evils would be averted if he were elected, for his main care would be to place the imperial crown on Charles, to exalt his own king, and to make an expedition first against the French and then against the infidels."[2]

But Charles was no Philip the Fair, and despite elaborate professions his real candidate was not Wolsey but Leo's first cousin, Giulio dei Medici. At the conclave Wolsey was never a strong candidate. He was too youthful, too determined, too

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iii., 1884. [2] *Ibid.*, 1892.

CHAP. IX. powerful. He was an Englishman, and no Englishman had been pope since Nicholas Brakespear in the middle of the twelfth century. He would never live in Rome, and Rome had no fancy to lose the pomp, the amusement, and the importance attaching to the papal residence in the Vatican. Above all, Wolsey could not be relied upon to further the imperialist interests, which were only partially and intermittently identical with those of England. The choice of the conclave fell, on January 9, 1522, neither upon him nor upon England's second string, Giulio dei Medici, but upon Adrian of Utrecht, formerly tutor to the emperor. The brilliant Florentine patron of art and literature was to be succeeded by a homely Flemish monk, frugal, impecunious, narrow, ascetic, who had nothing to recommend him to the Roman populace but feeble health and the prospect that his reign would be brief. Clerk, the British agent in Rome, was acutely disappointed, and recommended that Wolsey should entice Adrian VI., the new pope, to England, where he would probably die from the effects of the journey and the climate, for so it was most likely that the cardinal would be elected to succeed. Like master, like man. Charles, too, was forward with consolations of a more substantial kind, and promised to obtain for the disappointed candidate a pension drawn from the vacant benefices in Spain.

Marine disputes and a fresh victory for the Spanish harquebus in Italy, the battle of the Bicocca on April 27, 1522, precipitated the preconcerted rupture with France, and on May 29, while Charles and Henry were worshipping at Canterbury, Clarencieux' herald was delivering the English defiance to Francis at Lyons. So began one of the most purposeless and injurious contests in which this country has ever been engaged, a war waged to the accompaniment of solemn, religious pretexts, while the Turks were overflowing the plains of Hungary and beating down the heroic resistance of the Christian defenders of Rhodes—a war of fruitless raids and ravages, framed upon a scheme as disturbing to the balance of power in the west as it was fatal to the interests of Christendom in the east.

The final arrangements for the struggle were concerted between Henry and Charles at Windsor on June 19, and then in accordance with the plan the emperor embarked at Southampton and proceeded to Spain, leaving Henry to guard his Flemish

possessions. Surrey, the eldest son of the conqueror of Flodden, was named to command the force intended for the invasion of France, and Wolsey addressed himself to the task of finding the men and the money. Commissioners were despatched on March 20 into all the shires of England to inquire into the value of land, houses, and movables, and to array the maritime counties against an invasion. To meet initial expenses a loan of £20,000 was demanded of the London merchants, and later in the year a property tax was levied under the name of a loan with a promise of repayment. In the city of London the prospect of an additional tenth or thirteenth aroused the liveliest dissatisfaction. "O my Lord," said an alderman, "it is not two months since the king had of the city £20,000 in ready money on loan, whereby the city is very bare of money. For God's sake remember this, that rich merchants in ware be bare of money." Wolsey so far relented as to allow the citizens to make their own returns, and to promise that the contents should not be made public; and precautions were taken lest the particulars of clerical wealth should be divulged to the laity. But it was a crushing requisition, amounting to a tenth from the laity and a fourth from the clergy; and there was an ominous innovation in the method of collection, for the privy seals, instead of being sent to the individuals from whom the money was demanded, were addressed to the separate hundreds, with schedules attached to them of the taxable property and the amounts to be collected. It was in form a loan, in reality a tax. CHAP. IX.

Meanwhile the first acts of war had been committed. Surrey, who had sacked Morlaix in July, crossed the Straits of Dover in August, and marched, burning and ravaging, through the Boulonnois and Artois. Since the French had been instructed to avoid a general action, and the Anglo-imperial army was incapable of conducting a serious siege, the effort had no strategic purpose or useful result. It enabled a certain number of broken Englishmen to enrich themselves by plundering the miserable French peasantry. It exhibited the fact that the imperial horse, being irregularly paid, were not to be relied upon in a protracted campaign. It inflicted infinite cruelties upon a number of innocent villagers, and infinitesimal damage upon the military resources of France. It spread dysentery in

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the English camp, wasted English treasure, and formed the worst of all possible preludes to a serious and permanent recovery of any portion of the French possessions. By October 16 Surrey was back in Calais.

A more serious prospect confronted England in the north. The Duke of Albany, bred, schooled, and possessing land in France, had reappeared in Scotland, invited by the estates and welcomed by the queen. That Albany should assume the government of Scotland was viewed in London as part of the French design, and a preparation for a Scottish inroad across the border. Henry denounced the French gentleman to the estates and slandered him to the queen, but to no purpose. Margaret confessed that she had desired Albany's presence because she had been ill-treated, but protested that her son had nothing to fear from him. Albany avowed that he had assisted the queen at Rome to procure a divorce from her husband Angus, but "prayed he might break his neck" if ever he intended to marry her. The estates repudiated Henry's right to interfere.

In the course of the summer both parties prepared for action. The Earl of Shrewsbury was sent to muster the English forces in the north; whilst Albany marched southwards at the head of a force estimated at 80,000 men, and threatened Carlisle and the western border. The moment was favourable; for Carlisle was defenceless, and Shrewsbury was delayed at York for lack of transport and provisions. But Albany's heart was not in the business, and the three most powerful Scottish earls, Huntley, Argyle, and Arran, were in no mood to risk another Flodden. In this crisis Dacre, the warden of the western marches, proved himself a cool and adroit diplomatist. He obtained an interview with the Scottish leaders, and by a policy of bluff granted a truce for a month on September 11, which his rivals should never have accepted. Albany disbanded his army and returned to France on October 20, and Henry and Wolsey, saved by the promptitude and resource of their agent, affected to be disappointed of a signal victory over the Scots.

A war with the old enemies of the country was always popular until the moment came for finding the money. Henry had governed without a parliament for eight years, but faced

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with the prospect of exceptional military expenditure protracted over an indefinite period, he was constrained to appeal to parliament and to convocation for supplies. Accordingly on April 15, 1523, the commons met in the great chamber of Blackfriars, and not improbably out of deference to the king chose Sir Thomas More as their speaker. A fortnight later they learnt what was expected of them. The cardinal came down and explained how Francis had broken the league and made war upon the emperor's dominions; how he had withheld the tributes and payments due to England; how he had despoiled the king's subjects, and sent Albany to Scotland to invade the realm; and how to meet this emergency, a sum of £800,000 would be required to be raised by a tax of four shillings in the pound upon every man's lands and goods. It was a staggering amount, unparalleled in the recent annals of English finance; but when the house reassembled upon the next day, their speaker urged upon them that acquiescence was a duty. This, however, was by no means the view of the commons, and a lively debate ensued. It was argued that there was not so much money out of the king's hands in all the realm, and that the tax if levied would reduce men "to barter clothes for victuals and bread for cheese". Added to this, the king had already levied a loan of two shillings in the pound from the laity, and four shillings a pound from the spirituality, and now if this burden were superadded, how could men live? "The realm itself for want of money would grow in a sort barbarous and ignoble." After long debate a committee was sent to the cardinal to beseech him to move the king to be content with some easier sum. Wolsey replied that he would rather have his tongue plucked out of his head with a pair of pincers than do anything of the kind, and with this uncompromising reply the envoys returned to the commons.[1]

Nevertheless the discussion continued, and that not only within the walls of the house. Wolsey, indignant that a matter of state should be "blown abroad in every alehouse," determined to read the members a lesson in deportment. But here the cardinal met his match. More was in favour of the subsidy, and had done his best to commend it to the commons; but as

[1] Hall, *Chron. of Henry VIII.*, ed. Whibley, i., 284-86.

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speaker, he was guardian of the forms of the house, and prepared to defend them. A question arose as to whether the cardinal should be admitted with his full retinue. More in a skilful speech averted the adoption of a resolution hostile to Wolsey, while intimating that he was in agreement with the general sense of the house. "Masters," he said, "forasmuch as my lord cardinal lately, ye wot well, laid to our charge the lightness of our tongues for things uttered out of this house, it shall not in my mind be amiss to receive him in all his pomp, with his maces, his pillars, his poleaxes, his crosses, his hat, and his great seal too, to the intent that if he find the like fault in us hereafter, we may be the bolder from ourselves to lay blame on those that his grace bringeth hither with him." When the cardinal appeared and proceeded to ask the opinion of various members of the house, he was met by an obstinate and preconcerted silence. "Masters," he broke out, "unless it be the manner of your house, as in likelyhood it is, by the mouth of your speaker whom you have chosen for trusty and wise (as indeed he is) in such cases to utter your mind, here is without doubt a marvellous obstinate silence." More fell upon his knees and reverently excused the silence of the house, pointing out that while the commons might listen to communications from outside, it was not in accordance with their privileges to debate with strangers. Wolsey retired discomfited. He had come to convince and reprove; he had only succeeded in exasperating his audience. In the course of his exhortations he had described the luxury of the kingdom, as if "he grudged that any man should fare well and be well clothed but himself". It is not surprising that autocrats with hot tempers and vast schemes should pay scant respect to the sluggish currents of the general mind.[1]

The argument in the commons rose at times to high questions of national policy. A rising lawyer, by name Thomas Cromwell, wrote and perhaps delivered a speech which concentrates the whole case against the war policy and the war tax.[2] In view of the uncertainty of the succession, it was the summit of unwisdom to venture the king's life in a French

[1] Roper, *Life of More*, pp. 12-14.

[2] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iii., 2958; Merriman, *Life and Letters of Thomas Cromwell*, i., 30-44.

campaign. The war would undoubtedly harm France; but it would harm England to an incomparably greater extent. Before three summers had expired all the coin and bullion of the realm, and Cromwell conjectured that it would not greatly exceed a million, would be exhausted. That would mean ruin. We should have to coin leather; we should be unable ever to hurt France again or to help our prince. The Flemings, taking advantage of our misfortunes, would charge exorbitant prices for the supplies furnished to our troops. It might be that Paris was rich, and unable to resist the impact of the English army. Yet it should be remembered that, once across the Flemish border, the invaders would be surrounded by a cloud of skirmishers cutting off convoys, slaying the stragglers, and sedulously avoiding an open battle. An advance would be unsafe if strongholds were left behind uncaptured, and "what marvellous inconvenience, let of purpose, and importable charges we should sustain by a series of sieges was sufficiently disclosed in the last war, when the winning of Thérouanne cost his highness more than twenty such ungracious dogholes could be worth unto him".

Admitting, however, that the unlikely was achieved, how could so large and populous a country be held? In former times we had territories or allies in France; now we were confronting a nation "marvellously linked together," fully aware of our financial weakness, of our impatience of long campaigns, especially in winter, and extraordinarily skilled in diplomatic corruption. The arts which had won over three or four of the greatest nobles of Spain ten years before, and which were now successful in obtaining safe conducts for French merchants from the governors of the Low Countries, might be used again and again, and exercise a dissolvent power in the coalition. There was a common saying, "In Scotland is nought to win but strokes"; but there was another proverb equally familiar, "Who that intendeth France to win with Scotland let him begin". How foolish to think to retain possessions in France severed from us by the sea, while we suffer Scotland, a land joined to us by nature, accessible at every season, and capable of being subdued, to live under another polity. When the union with Scotland had been cemented, the country would have gained some experience "how to win and keep other possessions of our most redoubted sovereign",

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At last on May 13, the commons concluded to grant two shillings in the pound from incomes of twenty pounds and upwards; one shilling in the pound from incomes ranging between forty shillings and twenty pounds; and a poll-tax of fourpence upon persons whose income fell below forty shillings; the payment to be spread over two years. The cardinal was very angry, and the court party in the house was stirred up to secure some amendment. Sir John Hussey, of Lincolnshire, then master of the king's wards, appealed to the squires: "Let us gentlemen of fifty pounds' land and upwards give to the king of our lands twelvepence in the pound to be paid for three years". When the question was put, ten or twelve gentlemen said yea; and as the borough members declined to concern themselves with a tax intended only to affect the squirearchy, the gentry were burdened with an extra shilling by the vote of ten or twelve persons. On May 21, parliament was prorogued for Whitsuntide. As the burgesses appeared in the streets they were greeted with derisive shouts by the crowd: "Sirs, we hear say ye will grant four shillings in the pound, we advise you to do so that you may go home".

When the house reassembled the country party who had been permitted by the burgesses to impose a shilling in the pound upon land assessed at £50 and upwards, moved that a similar rate should be levied from goods in the fourth year. The house was immediately rent into two angry and sharply opposed factions. The burgesses voted unanimously against the tax; the knights and gentry unanimously in favour of it, and it was only by the intercession of the speaker "after long persuading and privy labouring of friends" that the strife was composed and the tax duly voted.

In return for these concessions parliament was permitted to console itself with the congenial task of preserving hares and repressing aliens. Since "it was the design of merchant strangers to bring the king's natural subjects from occupation to idleness" an act was passed to prevent the sale of broad white woollen cloths to aliens. Another act dealt with the taking of apprentices by strangers, and provided that no alien should take an alien apprentice or keep more than two alien journeymen; that aliens using handicrafts in London should be placed under the wardens and fellowships of handicrafts, and that the wardens

should have power to mark foreign goods. The burgesses must have felt a peculiar pleasure in wiping out scores against the foreigner who had so long battened under the shelter of the crown; and the temper in which these acts were passed must have been inflamed by memories of evil May day, and by the recent ill-treatment of the English merchants at Bordeaux at the hands of the French king.

Such activity had rarely been witnessed. County members who had looked upon a parliament as a convenient occasion for forwarding their private interests at court or in the Temple, found themselves so passionately absorbed in public business that there was little time for anything else. "Ye shall understand," wrote Cromwell to his friend Creke, "that I amongst others have endured a parliament which continued by the space of seventeen whole weeks, where we communed of war, peace, strife, contention, debate, murmur, grudge, riches, poverty, penury, truth, falsehood, justice, equity, ... and also how a commonwealth might be edified and also continued within our realm. Howbeit in conclusion we have done as well as our predecessors have been wont to do; that is to say as well as we might and left where we began."[1] In a less cynical view a correspondent wrote to Surrey that there had been "the greatest and sorest hold in the lower house for the payment of two shillings in the pound that ever was seen in any parliament,"[2] and the effervescence spread from the parliament through the country. A mad plot was hatched at Coventry to seize and rob the collectors of the subsidy, and then to hold Kenilworth against the king.

Meanwhile the clergy in a legatine synod collected at Westminster granted a moiety of one year's revenue of all the benefices in England to be levied in five years. Money could only be lawfully voted by the two convocations; but Wolsey called to Westminster the convocation of Canterbury which Warham had summoned to St. Paul's, joined it to the convocation of York, and extracted supplies in virtue of his legatine authority. It was a thing never seen before in England and resented by clergy and laity alike. "Gentle Paul," wrote

[1] Merriman, *Life and Letters of Thomas Cromwell*, i., 313; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iii., 3249.

[2] *Ibid.*, 3024.

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At last, however, the country was to have some fighting, burning, and ravaging for its money. In vain the pope appealed to the combatants to make up their quarrel and turn their arms against the Turk. "The real Turk," wrote Wolsey to the imperial chancellor on June 21, 1522, "is he with whom we are occupied, and I know no other Turk,"[1] and he remained of that opinion. Rhodes surrendered on December 20, a great catastrophe, deplored and expected, for which Charles laid the blame upon the pope. It was the Anglo-imperial case that Francis was the cause of the divisions of western Christendom, and that until France had been thoroughly quieted no effective crusade could be undertaken in the east. Wolsey's diplomacy was therefore directed to a vigorous prosecution of the war in every quarter of Europe where French interests were maintained. He sent Pace to the Swiss to get aid for an invasion of Languedoc, or at least to obtain a promise from them that they would refrain from taking service with the French. He laid an embargo upon the Flanders galleys in order to press Venice into the league which had been formed to combat French ambition in Italy. Against the French faction in Scotland he tried every art known in the repertory, kidnapping, assassination, the wholesale devastation of the border. To uproot the vermin more effectually, he appealed to Charles in February, 1523, for a postponement of the continental war, but was answered that if France were pressed upon all sides according to the plan which had been concerted, the Scottish danger would disappear of itself.

The Scottish danger proved to be less formidable than Wolsey expected. From April to September Surrey so ravaged the border that, in Wolsey's words, there was left "neither house, fortress, village, tree, cattle, corn, or other succour of man". But on the very day, September 25, on which Surrey burnt Jedburgh, Albany landed at Dumbarton with a force of foreign soldiery and a train of artillery, and Scotland rallied

[1] *Cal. State Papers, Spain*, ii., 437.

round the man who, in spite of his French ways and French speech, embodied the national sentiment. With a large following Albany marched down to the Tweed, and from the north bank of the river began to cannonade the castle of Wark. When a breach was made a French detachment was sent across the stream and fought its way into the outer court; but Sir William Lisle and his garrison held their own, and the Scottish army melted away in confusion at Surrey's approach. "By God's blood we will never serve you more, nor never will wear your badges again," exclaimed the border lords to Albany as he rode away from the encounter. CHAP. IX.

Like cowards stark
At the castle of Wark
By the water of Tweed
Ye had evil speed.
Like cancered curs
Ye lost your spurs
For in that fray
Ye ran away
With, hey, dog, hey!

was the verdict of the English poet.[1] The prestige of Albany did not survive this second blow and he sailed away to France, May 20, 1524, never to return. On July 26, James V., a boy of twelve years, was "erected" king at Edinburgh, and English diplomacy secured a momentary triumph over the Franco-Scottish connexion.

While Wolsey was endeavouring to overthrow French influence in Scotland, and while a league was being formed comprising Venice, Savoy, Florence, Montferrat, and Genoa, for the purpose of driving the French from Italy, Charles and Henry were designing the partition of France itself. In this project they were encouraged by the discovery that the constable of France, Charles Duke of Bourbon, one of the most powerful nobles in the kingdom, had been driven by wanton insults into opposition to the crown. In the course of September, 1522, English and imperialist agents had been at work upon the susceptibilities of the outraged prince, and it was determined that as soon as Francis should have crossed the Alps, Picardy, Burgundy, and Guienne should be simultaneously invaded by

[1] *Poetical Works of John Skelton*, edited by A. Dyce, ii., 69.

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English and imperialist armies, while Bourbon should raise the standard of revolt in the south of France. When victory had been obtained France should be divided among the conquerors. Dauphiné, Bourbon, and Provence should fall to the constable; Burgundy to Charles; the crown of France and the old English possessions to Henry. At Lyons on his way to Italy Francis discovered that Bourbon was a traitor, and leaving Bonnivet to conduct an army across the Alps, he waited to face the invasion which threatened him at home.

The English army for the invasion of Picardy was placed under the command of the Duke of Suffolk, and was described by Wolsey as the largest which had passed out of the realm for a hundred years. It consisted of 10,688 foot, 1,648 artillerymen, to whom must be added 1,700 men from Guisne and Calais, and Van Buren's imperial contingent of 3,000 and 4,000 landsknechts which joined in the first week of September. Suffolk's instructions were to effect a junction with the Burgundians and then turn suddenly upon Boulogne; but this design, definite, feasible, and specially advantageous to English interests, was stoutly opposed by the imperialists. Henry, however, was resolved to have the siege attempted, and not to send his army upon a distant excursion where they would depend for provisions on those of whose "slackness and hard-handling" he had already proof.[1] He was annoyed, too, that the invasion of Guienne was delayed, and suspected the emperor's honesty. This was on September 12, but two days later an event occurred the provision of which may have been connected with a change in the course of English strategy. On September 14 the papal throne was once more vacant. Six days before his death Adrian had summoned the cardinals to his chamber and told them that he expected soon to depart to the mercy of God; and all Rome began to canvass the prospects of the conclave. "It is hard to say," wrote the English agents at Rome to Wolsey, "where the garland shall light. If Medici cannot obtain it for himself or Farnese, it is very likely that this diadem shall alight on your head."[2] The news of the pope's death was known to Wolsey on September 30, and some rumour that the long illness had entered upon a critical stage may have reached

[1] *State Papers*, i., 131; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iii., 3320.
[2] *Ibid.*, 3331.

England on the 19th, when Wolsey suddenly changed his mind as to the true military objective of the English army, and threw himself into the wild plan which found favour in the counsels of Charles, of Margaret, and of Bourbon. Whereas he had formerly supported the siege of Boulogne, he now advocated a march on Compiègne, with a view to co-operating with a force of Germans marching under the command of Bourbon from the region of Besançon. To this proposal the king replied in a masterly letter concentrating all the strategic arguments for adhering to the previous plan: the lateness of season, the difficulty of providing commissariat, the likelihood that Bourbon's Germans would be dispersed before the English army came up, the certainty that Suffolk's men would be too late if they were allowed to besiege and loot the towns, and too mutinous to proceed if they were prevented from doing so. From this sound position Wolsey contrived to dislodge his master.[1] By September 30 it was known at Mechlin that the English force was to go forward upon its unlikely enterprise, and Wolsey received the congratulations of the astute lady who governed the Netherlands upon his success in dissuading the king from the siege of Boulogne.

The whole campaign ended in smoke. The German landsknechts, subsidised by English gold, dispersed for lack of pay after wasting the country as far as Langres, and left Bourbon helpless with 800 horse. Suffolk crossed the Somme, and on October 27 captured and spoiled Montdidier, but the disbanding of the Burgundian army deprived the expedition of its object. Short of pay and provisions and demoralised by the early frosts, English and imperialists alike demanded to be led home, and Suffolk and Van Buren, accepting the inevitable, withdrew the army to Valenciennes without a blow struck in the open field. The king laid the blame on the imperialists, and avowed himself ready with Burgundian help to continue the contest through the winter. As it was, he was forced to disband, and not the less willingly since Charles had never attempted the promised invasion of Guienne.

The vacancy at Rome was filled by the election of Giulio dei Medici, who assumed the name of Clement VII. Charles,

[1] *State Papers*, i., 135; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iii., 3346.

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who had written in favour of Wolsey, had ordered his letter to be stopped at Barcelona, and used all his influence to forward the candidate who proved to be successful. But an Italian pope was at least more likely to favour France than a German, and no one could count on Clement's loyalty to any cause save to that of the territorial interests of the Medicean house. "Very reserved, irresolute, decides few things for himself, loves money, coquettes with the French," such was the verdict of the Spanish envoy upon the new pontiff.

Wolsey had no reason to be pleased with the results hitherto obtained by the imperialist alliance. He had missed the papacy; the court had lost the French pensions; the country had incurred the expenses of a Scotch war, and not recovered an acre of her old inheritance. Charles, on the other hand, by means of English help, had been able to attend to Spanish affairs, had recovered Milan, Genoa, and Tournay, and was free from his bond to marry the French king's daughter. Nevertheless something might still come of the partnership, and Wolsey explained to the new pontiff that the Anglo-imperial alliance was the cause of orthodoxy against Lutheranism, of papal independence against a menaced repetition of the Avignon captivity. But if England had borne the brunt of war in 1523, it was only fair that Charles should come forward in 1524. Eventually it was determined that Bourbon, with the Italian army, should invade Provence, assisted by 100,000 gold crowns from the English exchequer, and that in case Henry should invade France in person he should receive the support of 4,000 imperial troops. Bourbon, in other words, was to try his fortune: if he succeeded, Henry would join in and earn a share of the spoil; if he failed, a diet might be summoned near the frontiers of Calais to patch up, with the consent of Charles, a truce or peace with the French king. Envoys were sent to Rome in March to give effect to this policy, but there were other eventualities to be considered. It might be convenient to break with Charles altogether. In June a French agent from Louise, the mother of the King of France, was treating surreptitiously with Wolsey in London.

The army of invasion, reckoned by Pace, who accompanied it, at more than 26,000 men, broke into Provence at the end of June, and the news of its early successes made a bustle of war-

like preparation in many an English manor-house. Success, however, soon turned to failure. Bourbon besieged Marseilles, made little impression on its stout walls or brave garrison, and after a siege of forty days was compelled to retire, his captains and men mutinous for pay. As the imperialists fled along the Riviera, Francis, who had collected an army at Avignon, saw a way suddenly opened for the reconquest of Milan, and raced his rivals into Italy by way of the Mont Cenis. But the decisive blow was not to come that year. Instead of pursuing the retreating force to a standstill, Francis turned aside to besiege Pavia, and the splendid resistance, protracted over three months, of Antonio de Leyva's German garrison infused fresh hope into the imperialist cause. For the moment, however, the French star was in the ascendant, and Venice and the papacy bound themselves, on December 12, to give no aid to Francis's enemies.

Wolsey was doubtless anxious that the French should not have a rood of Italian land, and urged Clement and the Venetians to stand firm to the empire, the cause of a Christian Hungary, an orthodox religion, an independent and honourable papacy. But at the same time he flattered himself that, even if fortune should declare against his ally, England would be in a better position than outside observers believed. The blow which dispersed the thick cloud of suspense was decisive beyond all expectation. At midnight on February 24, 1525, a body of imperialist pioneers began to break down the high wall which surrounded the headquarters of the French army besieging Pavia. Three breaches were made, and the first gleams of dawn were shed upon a fierce and confused conflict, in which the French army, surprised and exposed to a double onslaught both from the garrison of Pavia and the relieving force, was borne down and completely routed. The Spanish musketeers broke the French *gendarmerie*, the Swiss were taken or put to flight, and some 14,000 men were slain upon the field. All the artillery fell into the hands of the victors, and greatest prize of all, the King of France himself was taken.

When the news of the wonderful victory came to Charles he received it quietly and humbly, saying that it would enable him to pacify Christendom and to turn his forces against the infidel, the single wish of his life. Far different were the first

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deductions drawn from the event in England. "Now," said Henry to the Flemish commissioners, "is the time for the emperor and myself to devise the means of getting full satisfaction from France. Not an hour is to be lost;" and the cardinal, quick as ever with detail, said that if the regent of the Netherlands would furnish assistance, the king would invade Normandy in May. An embassy was despatched forthwith to Charles to propose a joint invasion of France, so that Henry might mount the throne and Charles recover the long-lost Burgundy. Schemes so magnificent as these would demand magnificent supplies. The last parliament had been obstructive and niggardly, and Henry and Wolsey did not care to face a second parliamentary rebuff: it was therefore necessary to resort to a loan, a course which had often proved to be more popular than a parliamentary and constitutional tax, for whereas a tax hit all classes, a loan or benevolence was apt to be exclusively drawn from the pockets of the rich.

But in raising "the amicable loan" of 1525 Wolsey threw to the winds all the counsels of financial and constitutional prudence. Under the pretext that the king was about to invade France in person, he demanded a sixth from lay, and a fourth from ecclesiastical property. A tax—for the contribution was both compulsory and assessed by royal commissioners—so heavy as this was calculated to bring confusion into every household in the kingdom. Wolsey, however, was blind to the danger signals. "Sirs," he cried to the lord mayor, aldermen, and principal citizens of London, "resist not and ruffle not in this case, for it may fortune to cost some their heads."[1] But the country had had enough of taxation. The clergy, already hard hit by the war levies, spoke up for the liberties of the people, saying that the king could take no man's goods but by order of law, and that they would pay nothing unless it were granted in convocation. In the diocese of Salisbury every secular priest refused to pay. In Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, in Huntingdonshire and Kent, most of the heads of the religious houses declared that it was impossible for them to pay the full amount. Wolsey proposed to the archbishop, who was on the commission for Kent, that "divers of the saddest

[1] Hall, ii., 36.

sort" should be "secretly practised with"; but the primate was not sanguine. Everywhere the loan was denounced, in sermons, in taprooms, in bills and placards. It disturbed the course of business all through the country. The gentry got no rents; the farmers sold no cattle at the fairs; the clothiers and husbandmen turned off their hands. The Kentishmen mishandled Sir Thomas Boleyn, one of the commissioners, at Maidstone. The Essex men refused to meet the commissioners except in the open air. The citizens of Norwich declared that the prosperity of their city depended on worsted and strawmaking, and that having to pay their hands weekly, they had no coin left over for the king, but were willing to offer plate instead. In Suffolk things came to the verge of civil war. CHAP. IX.

To quiet the discontent, the city of London was informed that the king would prescribe no sum, but accept from his loving subjects whatsoever each might be inclined to give. But a benevolence was almost as unpopular as a subsidy. The wards replied to their respective aldermen that they had paid enough already. A city councillor told Wolsey that benevolences were contrary to a statute made in Richard III.'s reign. When the cardinal asked the mayor and aldermen how much they were prepared to grant, "I pray you pardon me," answered the mayor, "for if I enter into any grant, it might fortune to cost me my life". "Your life," replied the cardinal, "that is a marvellous word. For your will towards the king will the citizens put you in jeopardy of your life?"[1]

When the news was brought down into the country that London had been accorded a special privilege, the task of the commissioners became well-nigh hopeless. Luckily in the eastern counties, where the situation was most acute, it was handled with good sense and moderation. Four thousand men had risen in the Suffolk weaving towns, put themselves into harness, rung the alarm on the church bells, and were prepared to resist the commissioners by force. The Duke of Norfolk, who had already experienced no little difficulty in his own county, coming down in May, into the midst of the malcontents, asked them who was their captain. "My lord," said John Green, a certain well-aged man of fifty years and above, "since

[1] Hall, ii., 41.

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you ask who is our captain, forsooth his name is Poverty, for he and his cousin Necessity have brought us to this doing." Norfolk, who knew that the man spoke truth, and that the mere rumour of the subsidy had thrown many a farm hand and spinner out of employment, advised the company to disperse, and promised on receiving their formal submission to intercede with the king. On May 11 and 12 the submissions were received, the men kneeling in their shirts and crying for mercy, and saying that they were the king's most humble and obedient servants led astray by lack of work.

Before a feeling so stern, so universal, and so determined Henry was compelled to withdraw his proposals, and the withdrawal of the proposals meant the abandonment of the ambitious project which the proposals were intended to promote. If the foreign schemes of the king subsequently assumed a more sober hue, it was because he felt in this salient instance the limitations imposed by the national will upon the resources which he was entitled to expect. To conquer France Henry must summon a parliament or provoke a revolution. He was too shrewd for the one, too wise for the other. It was now high time to reverse the course of the ship of state.

For such a change of policy Wolsey was fully prepared. Charles was neither willing nor able to fall into a scheme for the invasion of France without substantial pecuniary help from England. The very army which conquered at Pavia was without pay, and would not move from Italy unless pay were forthcoming. Even the wages of the emperor's household were in arrear. Money therefore was essential to him, more essential than the distant prospect of little Lady Mary. His thoughts turned to the Portuguese match, so popular with his nobility, so lucrative, and above all capable of instant realisation. His feelings to Wolsey were not friendly, ever since the cardinal had opened the despatches of one of his ambassadors and called him a liar to another. "I see no way," he wrote on June 25, 1525, to the Archduke Ferdinand, "except for me to marry Isabella of Portugal with whom the king offers 1,000,000 ducats, but I shall not take any step without the consent of the King of England as I have sent him word. I wish for no war this year, but to attend to my marriage."[1] And by this

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 1453.

time Wolsey, too, had become ardent for peace and the French alliance. If the league with the emperor promised gorgeous but uncertain conquests, an alliance with France at least meant safe and substantial pensions. On August 14 a truce was signed between France and England, and all the substantial points of the treaty arranged. A sum of 2,000,000 crowns to be paid at the rate of 100,000 crowns a year, the annuity to continue throughout Henry's life, was the price which France had to pay for English friendship. Before the end of September the first instalment was on its way to England. "The cardinal," reported De Pradt to Charles, on October 15, "has two ends in view, first to obtain great sums of money for the King of England under pretence of war, second to keep the French King and the Emperor in perpetual war and distrust."[1] With Francis a prisoner in Madrid and Charles master of Lombardy, the balance of European power was certainly not evenly adjusted. Yet Wolsey's diplomacy had contributed to this undesirable and unexpected result.

[1] *Letters and Papers*, iv., 1702.

CHAPTER X.

A MATTER OF CANON LAW.

CHAP. X. THE revolution in English foreign policy, which has just been described, was rendered necessary by the inability of the king to obtain supplies for a foreign war, and was adjusted to the altered condition of European affairs. To Wolsey and his master the danger now to be combated was no longer the ambition of Francis but that of Charles. The emperor had used his victory to extort terms from the French king which, if faithfully executed, would upset the balance of power in Europe. By the treaty of Madrid, of January 14, 1526, Francis was released upon condition of surrendering the Burgundian duchy and renouncing all pretensions to any part of Italy. He was to marry the emperor's sister, to give up the suzerainty over Flanders, to obtain Henri d'Albret's resignation of his claims in Navarre, and to leave two sons in Spain as hostages for the fulfilment of the treaty. The emperor informed his captive that it was his intention at all hazards to pass into Italy in August, to remain in Rome two years, to summon a general council of the Church, and then to make preparations for an expedition against the Turks. To the Florentine ambassador Contarini he announced that he would take vengeance on those who had wronged him and "most especially on that villain Pope". Certainly no one had more reason to fear the emperor than Clement VII., who, owing his fortunes to Charles, had gone over to the French side in the hour of trouble.

For England to make war upon Charles was out of the question; but English diplomacy might contribute to "prevent Charles climbing any higher". An embassy was sent to Francis I. to deliver the royal congratulations upon his release from captivity and to express, "as of themselves soberly and in

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manner of stupefaction and marvel," the sense of the envoys as to the astounding character of the concessions which Francis had been compelled to make; to intimate "of what small effect in conscience or law is a bond or treaty made in captivity," and how the pope, the Venetians, the Florentines, and the Swiss would take good care that the emperor obtained no further hold in Italy or Burgundy.[1] The freedom of Italy, the revision of the Madrid treaty, the negotiation of a marriage alliance with France, became the watchwords of English diplomacy. So far as Burgundy was concerned, Henry and Wolsey need not have felt any anxiety. Before signing the treaty of Madrid Francis, who required no lessons in perfidy, had executed a secret deed disavowing all intention of keeping it. But in Italy the war continued, and there the imperialists seemed likely to obtain a decisive preponderance.

On May 22 a confederacy was formed at Cognac between the pope, France, Florence, Venice, and Francesco Maria Sforza, to resist the designs of Charles; and Henry was named protector of the Holy league. The satisfaction of the pope was intense. He wrote that but for Henry and Wolsey France would never have been brought into the combination. But though Wolsey was anxious enough that France should bestir herself upon behalf of the liberties of Italy, he was not inclined to commit his own country to any serious enterprise on their behalf. His aim was first to put diplomatic pressure upon Charles to release the French hostages for a reasonable sum, to pay his debts to England, and to desist from molesting the Italian powers; and then, if that pressure should fail, to accept the protectorship of the league and to form a straiter amity with France. All through the summer piteous entreaties came from Italy for English help. Still Wolsey was obdurate. He gave the league fair words but neither money nor men.

Such a policy may have been unheroic, but it was justified by events. The summer went disastrously for the pope and his allies. Bourbon, who took over the command of the imperial forces, beat the Duke of Urbino, July 6, and on the 25th compelled Sforza to surrender Milan. Cardinal Pompeo Colonna, a Ghibelline and a sworn foe to Clement, prompted by the

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 2039.

CHAP. X. imperial envoy Ugo de Moncada, threw his soldiery into Rome, attacked St. Peter's, put the pope's guard to the sword, plundered the papal palace and the houses of the cardinals, and compelled Clement to take refuge in the Castle of St. Angelo. "Never," wrote Sir Gregory Casale, "was there such cruelty and sacrilege."[1] The pope, whom no Roman had attempted to defend from the fury of his assailants, appealed to Henry to show his wonted generosity to the holy see; but Henry was only too well pleased that impediments should arise "whereby his entry into the league of Italy may be well and with good colour differed without his dishonour."[2]

The league of Cognac professed to be framed for the purpose of securing European peace, and left a place for Charles V. if he would put Sforza into possession of Milan, pay his debts to England within three months, release the French princes for a ransom, and go to Rome for his coronation with such escort as the pope and Venice should approve. But these terms Charles could never allow to be extorted from him, and the league was really an instrument of war. Yet never was peace more urgently required in Christendom. On the very day before the Colonnas plundered the capital of the Roman Church, news arrived that all the chivalry of Hungary had been destroyed by the Turks at Mohacs. It was the greatest disaster that had befallen Christian arms since Varna, and it opened the gateway of Europe to the invader. "On the receipt of the news," wrote Casale to Henry, "the pope convoked all the cardinals and ambassadors, and was with us for more than four hours, beseeching us with tears to exhort our princes to make a truce."[3] He offered to follow the crusade in person and to provide crosses, chalices, and everything for the sacred enterprise; to go to France, and to consult with Francis and Wolsey what to do, and then treat with the emperor as they might advise. Campeggio informed Henry VIII. that all the pope's hope in this critical time lay in England. Clerk, the English envoy in Paris, wrote on October 5 to Wolsey: "Happy be we who through your grace's policy have not been drawn into the Italian league, which now through their negligence is come to nothing.

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 2510.
[2] *State Papers*, i. 177; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 2541.
[3] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 2510.

It is my chance, now and then, to talk with many an afflicted and sorrowful good Christian, who call upon me to exhort the king and you, as they in whom is now the only hope and stay of Christendom; for they reckon the pope is ruined, and the French are slack and have little care for their own interests and none for those of Christendom."

When Henry received the news of the double catastrophe, he said that he rejoiced in one thing "which is the saying of Christ unto Peter: '*Oravi ne deficiat fides tua*'". He then implored the pope "not to remit his high courage nor to be abashed for any heinous outrage lately done against Christ's Church and his Holiness, but to gather himself with wisdom to stick unto that that is intended by the league, and not to esteem his late promises made unto Don Hugo and the Cardinal de Colonna, extorted by force and violence, but to think in time convenient to be revenged".[1] To encourage his holiness to persevere, he would send him 30,000 ducats, all the more readily considering "the high pleasure and profit" which the annual revenue from some alum mines in Italy to be procured by the pope's means would bring him. Wolsey instructed the English ambassador in Spain, on October 23, to express Henry's pleasure that Charles was anxious for the repose of Christendom and the suppression of heresy, to urge the emperor to moderate his demands, and to offer English mediation. The Duchy of Milan must be put in impartial custody, and the emperor must take the imperial crown without causing suspicion in Italy. At the same time a protest must be offered against the violence attempted on the pope and the spoiling of the Church of St. Peter's. Charles was quite willing to accept mediation, and offered to lay down arms if the league would do likewise. He told Lee in December that he took Wolsey for his friend and father, and would always be guided by his counsel, and sent Inigo de Mendoza to England to treat for a universal peace in compliance with Henry's wish. He was content to come to Italy with 5,000 persons, and to depart for Germany as soon as he had received the crown; to refer the case of the Duchy of Milan to two judges; to accept 2,000,000 crowns for the release of the French king's sons, and to raise an army for the crusade.

[1] *State Papers*, i., 181; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 2558.

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While ambassadors were passing to and fro between England and France, and France and Spain, events were rapidly developing in Italy. There the truce had been short-lived and war had broken out again. An English envoy, Russell, arriving with a present of 30,000 ducats to the pope, created a brief feeling of exultation. "The cardinals," wrote Campeggio, (on February 7, 1527) "are unanimous in declaring that Henry was God's blessing to them, the patron of Italian liberty, the real Defender of the Faith." They wrote to Wolsey that there had never been any one in past times or in their own who contributed more to the advancement of the holy see, "*qui optimum regem in dies meliorem suis conciliis efficiat* and who watches over the see apostolic *non tam ut filius et legatus quam ut patronus et tutor*". The pope told Russell that he put the treaty of peace entirely into Wolsey's hands. The money had come in the nick of time. "Of all the thousands spent by the king and Wolsey on behalf of the holy see this has produced most fruit." [1]

It is probable that without the intervention of England a European peace might have been obtained. Charles was moderate; Clement was frightened; Venice was inclined to a truce; Francis was only anxious to recover his children. Wolsey, however, was afraid that France, Venice, and the papacy would treat with Charles without his knowledge. To a French embassy, headed by Grammont, Bishop of Tarbes, which arrived in England on February 26, he explained that the real interests of France would be served by a marriage alliance and closer conjunction with England. When the peace and alliance had been settled, the two powers could require the emperor to enter the league upon honourable conditions, and in case of his refusal declare war upon him. On April 30, three treaties with France were signed at Westminster embodying these views. Ambassadors were to be sent to the emperor to treat of the ransom and the payment of the English debt. The king's daughter Mary was to be married either to Francis or to his second son, Henry Duke of Orleans. If the emperor refused the conditions offered by the allies, a declaration of war should be made on him, the expenses to be paid by Francis even if the

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 2857, 2866, 2919.

marriage did not take place. Francis was also required to pay a perpetual pension of 50,000 gold crowns, and to deliver to Henry an annual consignment of salt valued at 15,000 crowns. The two kings were to meet frugally at Paris. When the French envoys demurred at the mention of a tribute, the reply was that the estates of England would not accept a treaty without salt and a pension, that if there were no recompense for English claims on France, he, Wolsey, "would be thought either a fool or a traitor, and would be in danger of being murdered in his house". As it was, the opinion of many of the council was against him, and it was well known that the alliance was unpopular in the country. The king added, in his cheery way, that 15,000 crowns was nothing, and that he had often lost more at play.[1] King and cardinal had, in fact, lowered their terms, for earlier in the year they had stipulated, not only for a pension and an annuity of salt, but also for the county of Guisnes. But Wolsey spoke truth when he said that the French alliance was unpopular in the country. "Disaffection to the king," wrote the Spanish ambassador, "and hatred to the legate are visible everywhere." The French match was denounced in the talk of the town and in nocturnal handbills, and rumour went that Wolsey would be relieved of his diplomatic duties. So keen was the feeling, that the king found it expedient to explain to the French ambassadors at a public audience that Mary was as yet too young to be married into France. CHAP. X.

While Wolsey was bargaining about salt, matrimony, and peace with the French envoys in London, the Duke of Bourbon with an army of 20,000 men, part Spanish but mainly German, was advancing upon Rome from the north. Henry advised Francis to send 30,000 men into Italy under a competent commander (such as Lautrec) to check the imperialists, and offered to contribute 100,000 crowns to the enterprise; but long before these counsels could take effect a catastrophe occurred which impressed the imagination of the Christian world even more powerfully than the fall of Rhodes, or the battle of Mohacs, or the sack of the papal palace in the previous year. The landsknechts in Bourbon's army had imbibed just enough of

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 3105.

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Lutheranism to discard the scruples of religion and not enough to respect the scruples of conscience. They were unpaid, wild with hunger and privation, mutinous and formidable, possessed by a blind lust for pillage and desecration. On the misty morning of May 6 they threw themselves at the defences of the Leonine city, and maddened by a resistance which slew their leader and left 1,000 dead outside the walls, spared neither man, woman, nor child in the first fury of victory. "Once inside," writes an Italian contemporary, "they began to plunder tumultuously, not only without respect to friends or authority or the dignity of prelates, but violating also temples and monasteries and relics honoured by the concourse of the whole world." Rumour, magnifying tenfold, went that 44,000 lives had been destroyed in the orgy of violence and lust. The palaces of all the cardinals were sacked; the streets were filled with the cries of nuns and Roman ladies sacrificed to the passions of a brutal soldiery. "What Goths," wrote Sanga to the nuncio in England, "what Vandals, what Turks, were ever like this army of the emperor in the sacrilege they have committed?" In the very citadel of the Christian republic men who had once professed Christ had spared neither sex nor age, rank nor order, altar nor relic. What would be the future, with a pope the captive of the imperial army? It was rumoured in Spain that the Churches of France and England would break off from their connexion with the holy see, and that Wolsey was going into France to secure this object. Such an event would apparently have been regarded with equanimity by the commonalty of London. They said, according to Hall, that "the pope was a ruffian, unworthy of his place, that he began the mischief, and that he was well served". But to the king and cardinal the news that the pope had fallen into the hands of the imperialists came like a thunderbolt, for a question had suddenly arisen which Henry could only solve to his satisfaction with the co-operation of a pope, independent and fearless of the empire.

The belief that the peace and security of England were bound up with a plain and uncontested succession to the throne was ingrained by the pressure of historic memories upon the national mind. A contested succession had involved the country in half a century of civil war, and there was no reason to expect that similar consequences would not again follow from similar

causes. But for the succession to be plain and uncontested, it was a primary condition that a lawful male heir should be born to the king and queen. The experiment of a female ruler had only been once tried since the Norman conquest, and the Empress Matilda had plunged the country into civil chaos. Yet it seemed likely that upon the king's death this dangerous experiment would be repeated. Of the six children born to Catharine between 1511 and 1518 one only, the Lady Mary, had survived, and after 1525 it was known that Catharine would bear no more children. The succession after Henry's death would then devolve upon a daughter, who, if the diplomatic schemes now pressed forward were carried out, would in due course of time be married into the royal house of France. It was natural to entertain a fear that such a marriage would lead to a loss of national independence, and we cannot doubt but that this apprehension entered into the argument of those who, like the Duke of Norfolk, opposed Wolsey's French alliance at the council board. The want of a male heir threw a shadow upon every forecast of the future. If Mary were left unmarried England would be weakened in the diplomatic markets of Europe, and the king's death would surely be followed by a disastrous contest for her hand. Civil war would almost certainly ensue if she ascended the throne as the wife of an English noble; and the third alternative was even more forbidding, for a foreign marriage, though it might fail to arouse the jealousies of the nobility, would set an alien prince at the head of English affairs. CHAP. X.

Henry's marriage with Catharine had now lasted eighteen years, and contrary to some expectations had survived the knowledge of Ferdinand's duplicity in 1514.[1] The king had not been a faithful husband, but strict fidelity was hardly expected of princes, and judged by the standard of a Francis, he was a model of propriety. A natural son had been born to him in 1519 by Elizabeth Blount, but with this exception we know of no royal bastards. The boy was made Duke of Richmond and Somerset in 1525, given a council and establishment, and plans were framed to proclaim him King of England and Ireland, and to marry him either to his half-sister Princess Mary or else to Doña Maria of Portugal, the niece of Charles

[1] *Cal. State Papers, Venice*, ii., 479.

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V. Such a departure was in itself a symptom that Henry had begun to feel the necessity of making some artificial provision for the succession. But a bastard remained a bastard, however highly he might be married, and no legitimation, however solemn, could really efface the bar sinister. Another solution of the puzzle began to exert an increasing power over Henry's mind. From the beginning there had been grave doubts as to the validity of Henry's marriage with the widow of his deceased brother. Julius II. himself had not granted the dispensation without an overt expression of doubt as to the competence of the curia, nor had the marriage passed unchallenged in the council of Henry VII. To a man so prosperous, so splendid, so conscious of nobility, of rectitude, of special services to God and the Church, there seemed to be some mysterious paradox in the strange succession of calamities which had overcome the children of this dubious marriage. What could God mean by depriving the defender of the faith, the hammer of the heretics, the hope of Christendom, the musician, the warrior, the statesman, the athlete, of just that one common thing accorded to peasants, to heretics, to Turks, without which his kingdom could not stand? It was impossible that God could be unjust. He must wish Henry to have his way, Henry, who, save in one thing, had always had it. There must be a meaning in the riddle, and the meaning could only be that the marriage with Catharine was looked on with disfavour from above, that it was no marriage, that it had never been a marriage, that the king had for eighteen years been living in sin. So construed, the calamities in Catharine's nursery would assume the form of benign monitions, exhibiting the special favour of God to God's special favourite, beacons specially prepared to light him into the safe harbour of lawful and unquestioned matrimony.

Reasons of a different order combined to assist, and were said to have originated, the logical process. Henry had fallen in love. Among the ladies of the court were two sisters, Mary and Anne, daughters of Sir Thomas Boleyn, a substantial, well-connected, and grasping knight. The family fortunes of the Boleyns, founded by Sir Thomas's grandfather, Sir Geoffrey Boleyn, lord mayor of London in 1479, had been swollen by two prosperous marriages, and were destined to be illustrated by a third, more splendid and momentous than either. Sir

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William Boleyn, son of Sir Geoffrey and father of Sir Thomas, had married Margaret, daughter of Thomas Butler, Earl of Ormond. Sir Thomas became the husband of the daughter of the Earl of Surrey. Anne, the younger daughter of Sir Thomas, born in 1507, was therefore niece of Thomas Howard, third duke of Norfolk, who upon his father's death in 1524 became the most important noble in the kingdom; while in virtue of his Ormond connexion Sir Thomas Boleyn came into possession of at least half of the great English and Irish estates of the Butlers, and cherished a claim upon the title and the residue of the Irish property as well. Of the early life of Anne but little is known. It seems probable, however, that in 1514, when she was seven years of age, she was sent to France in the charge of her elder sister, who was one of the gentlewomen in attendance on the queen; that she remained in France after the death of the king and the return of his widow to England, and that during part at least of her French sojourn she was placed under the care of Queen Claude of France. Seven years passed, during which Anne became proficient in the language, the elegancies, and not improbably in the vices of French society. Returning to England in 1521 she entered the suite of Queen Catharine, and here her flashing eyes, sprightly wit, and perhaps also some charm of French intonation and speech, some touch of dainty and radiant caprice arrested admiration. In her absence, in February, 1520, her elder sister Mary, who had acquired a reputation for profligacy abroad, had been married to William Carey, one of the king's gentlemen; and soon afterwards, though the date cannot be fixed with certainty, attracted and gratified the passion of the king. A shower of honours fell upon the father of the royal favourite, and from 1522 to 1525 Sir Thomas Boleyn was the recipient of a number of lucrative offices, culminating in the viscounty of Rochford in 1525.[1]

Meanwhile Anne had been the subject of a romance. Among the young noblemen who were finishing their education in the cardinal's household was Lord Percy, eldest son and heir of the Earl of Northumberland. While the cardinal was transacting affairs of state, Percy would spend his time in the

[1] James Gairdner, "Mary and Anne Boleyn," *Engl. Hist. Rev.*, viii., 53-60, x., 104; J. H. Round, *Early Life of Anne Boleyn* (1886).

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queen's chamber, dallying with the maidens of the court. In the process he lost his heart to Anne, and the young couple were secretly betrothed. Whether the charms of the girl had already made an impression on the royal heart, or whether he had arranged another marriage for his wife's lady-in-waiting, Henry determined that the romance should not proceed, and instructed Wolsey to break the match. Delicacies of conduct were not in the cardinal's sphere, and Wolsey performed his task with an emphatic and effective brutality, humiliating to Percy and not likely to be forgiven by Anne. The youth was married off within the year; the girl was for a while banished from the court. But sometime late in 1526 or early in 1527 she captured the fancy of the king.

The wheels of the political and religious calculus now moved with increasing velocity. By April, 1527, it was clear to Henry that he was a bachelor, clear that with the least possible delay Anne must be his lawful wife and the mother of his children. His alleged marriage must be annulled by the pope. Similar favours had been granted for causes less grave and to persons less deserving than the defender of the faith. At the end of April or at the beginning of May he imparted his secret to Wolsey.

One day early in May Wolsey and Warham, in accordance with a prearranged plan, entered the palace of Greenwich and summoned the king to appear on the 17th of the month in the legate's house at Westminster to answer a matter affecting the "tranquillity of consciences" and the salvation of the royal soul. The matter was the royal marriage. The proceedings were secret; the proctors who were selected to attack and defend the union were members of the royal household. The king appeared in the *rôle* of a defendant, a sacrificial victim. Scrupulous minds attacked the validity of his marriage; but he would defend it, prepared however, if beaten in argument, to bow his head to the weight of theological authority. A salvo of canonical artillery was interchanged between Dr. Bell and Dr. Wolman, mock combatants in a mock suit. The bull of 1503 was cited on the one side, contested on the other; but at the third sitting on May 31 the proceedings were closed. It was a case, said the cardinal, sufficiently thorny and arduous to be submitted to the special consideration of eminent theologians and jurists.

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Wolsey had already begun to sound the divines. He was prepared to argue that the marriage was invalid, whether or no Catharine during the marriage with Arthur had contracted affinity with the king. But meanwhile the plot had leaked out. As early as May 18, Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, who had been informed by Catharine, wrote to tell his master that divorce was in the air. On June 22 the king himself told her that they had been living in mortal sin and must separate. She was "very stiff and obstinate," full of passionate and indignant protest at the sudden wrong. It was possible that she might influence the divines; at one moment the king suspected that her protests had deflected Wolsey himself.

To Wolsey, who was anxious to promote a solid peace between Henry, Francis, and Charles, the king's "secret matter" must have been a cause of desperate perplexity. Yet he knew his master well enough to see that opposition was hopeless and that he must either serve or fall. "I take God to record," he wrote, on July 5 in reference to the plan, "that there is nothing earthly that I count so much as the advancing thereof." A little later he prayed that God might gratify his master's "most noble and virtuous desires". When Fisher maintained that the dispensation properly fell within the papal prerogative, he insinuated to the king that this very tenable opinion "proceedeth rather of appetite than of sincerity of his learning in Scripture". In pursuance of a plan concerted with Henry, he secured the adhesion of Warham and the temporary neutrality of Fisher, by representing that the king's scruples had been prompted by an objection raised by the Bishop of Tarbes during the recent negotiations over the proposed French marriage with Mary. The bishop, it was said, had objected that the bull of Julius II. was insufficient, since the impediment was *de jure divino*, while the pope could only dispense *ex urgentissima causa*, but further discussion had been postponed until Wolsey's coming into France. Meanwhile it was only natural for the king to take steps "for the searching and trying out of the truth". Fisher, who had declared himself for the validity of the marriage, was induced to promise that he would give no counsel to the queen but such as should stand with the king's pleasure. Wakefield, the Hebrew scholar, and Pace, the Dean of St. Paul's, ranged themselves on the king's side.

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In July the cardinal crossed the Channel at the head of a splendid embassy to complete the French alliance and to pave the way for a universal peace. If the Spanish envoy is to be trusted he left enemies behind him at court, who took advantage of his absence to undermine his credit with the king. Anne, profuse in cordial expressions of grateful expectancy, was nevertheless alive to the fact that Wolsey had broken her alliance with Percy, and that he favoured a French marriage for the king. Anne's interests were those of her father Rochford and of her uncle Norfolk, and the ranks of the intriguers were joined by Suffolk, a noble and a soldier, who having earned laurels in the French war hated the upstart who had humiliated his order and was now destroying his trade. Any delay, any trip in the negotiations might be fatal to the absent diplomatist. It would be represented that he was lukewarm in the king's secret matter, and Wolsey knew well enough that if the king once believed him to be lukewarm his career was closed.

On every side the situation was full of difficulty. The pope was a prisoner in the hands of the imperialists, and unless French as well as English pressure was brought to bear upon the curia, the college of cardinals would be unlikely to brave the emperor's displeasure by countenancing Henry's scheme for a divorce. Again, it was part of Wolsey's mission to obtain for Mary a husband from the royal house of France, yet if the marriage of Henry and Catharine were declared null and void, Mary would become *ipso facto* illegitimate. In other words, while French assistance was urgently needed to procure the divorce, there was some delicacy in disclosing the real object for which the co-operation of the two powers was so pressingly demanded. Wolsey told Henry that he intended to defer communicating the secret matter to Francis until the point of his departure, and then only "after such a cloudy and dark sort that he shall not know your grace's utter determination and interest in that behalf". To the French king he said that he had come for three things, and three things only, the marriage of Mary, the negotiation of a peace between Francis and Charles, and the deliverance of the pope.

For the moment and to the exterior view the cardinal appeared to have achieved a triumphant success. The peace between England and France was solemnly confirmed at

Amiens, Mary was pledged to the Duke of Orleans, and the two allied countries agreed upon the demands which they would press upon Charles. But meanwhile, on August 11, Wolsey learnt that a rumour of the impending divorce had passed from England to Spain and from Spain to France, and that all the wheels of the imperial diplomacy were set in motion against him. It was now more than ever unlikely that Charles would release the pope; but the pope's captivity might be a blessing in disguise. It might be possible to convoke the cardinals to Avignon, and to obtain a declaration from the college that they would not be bound by anything which the pope might do during the period of his captivity. It might be possible to obtain Clement's consent for such a convocation to be held during his captivity. Should not the sound members support the afflicted head? A gathering of cardinals held at the invitation of the French king within the sphere of French influence would be pliable. Schism was in the air. It was rumoured that one of the objects of Wolsey's French journey was to effect a permanent separation of the French and English Churches from Rome. Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador in London, went so far as to say that the cardinal had been offered the patriarchate of England and France. CHAP. X.

The cardinals refused to dance to the pipe. Summoned to Avignon by Francis, enticed by the letters, safe conducts, and bribes of Wolsey, they remained at home, prudently obedient to the pope's command. Wolsey wrote a letter to Clement protesting against any acts which might be wrung from the pontiff while he was a prisoner; and three cardinals set their seals to the document. His fancy ran riot on an interim scheme of Church government to be devised by himself and his friends in the college, and in September he instructed four agents, Ghinucci, Stafileo, Casale, and Gambara, all of them Italians, to obtain from Clement a general faculty "to do and execute all things" during the captivity of the pope. It was all the more imperative for Wolsey to act promptly, since the king had profited by his absence in France to despatch a mission upon his own account. On September 10 Dr. Knight arrived in Compiègne on his way to Rome charged with a request to the vicar of Christ, that if difficulties were found in the dissolution of the existing marriage, a dispensation might at least be granted to

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enable the king to be the husband of two wives at the same time, a step for which precedent was furnished in the lives of the polygamous heroes of the Pentateuch.[1] A quest so improbable and outrageous was clear proof that Henry was listening to rash and hostile counsel, and that Wolsey must control the negotiations with the curia. But though the king was persuaded to revise the draft of Knight's instructions as "too much to be required and unreasonable to be granted," he still continued to negotiate behind the cardinal's back, and through the indiscretion of his agent the pope was prematurely informed of Henry's designs upon Anne Boleyn.

The plans which had been built upon the supposition of a prolonged papal captivity were rudely shattered. On December 6, 1527, Clement was permitted to escape to Orvieto, a neglected little Umbrian town, which now became the theatre of a fierce and tenacious contest between the imperialist cardinals and the English envoys. It was the English design to extract from the pope two concessions, first, a dispensation for the king's remarriage in case the union with Catharine should prove to be invalid, and that so couched as to meet all canonical objections to a marriage with Anne Boleyn; and secondly, a decretal commission made out to Wolsey, or some other person known to be favourable to the king's cause, which, while conceding full and final power to try the validity of the marriage, should practically determine the verdict in advance. Bull and commission were drafted in England and sent out to Italy for papal signature. There was little difficulty about the bull of dispensation. Anne's precontract with Percy, Henry's connexion with Anne's sister—these were impediments which the curia was willing to obliterate and condone. On December 23 the conditional dispensation was granted.[2] But the decretal commission was a very different affair, for it pledged the pope from the very beginning to the view that the dispensation of Julius II. was invalid. The English canonists did not dispute the papal power to dispense, but they attacked the validity of the bull, on the ground that it was granted under false pretences and for insufficient cause. There were, it was contended, five objections to the bull of Pope Julius. It stated that Henry

[1] *Academy*, xv., 239; *English Historical Review*, xi., 685, 686.

[2] Ehses, *Römische Dokumente*, p. 14.

desired the marriage; but so far from seeking it, he was not even aware that a dispensation was granted. It was stated again that the marriage was contracted for the sake of preserving peace and alliance; but England and Spain were already at peace, and there was no apparent danger of war. At the time when the bull was granted Henry was only twelve years old, and therefore not of lawful age. Persons mentioned in the bull, notably Isabella of Castile and Henry VII., had died before the marriage took place; and lastly Henry, upon reaching the age of fourteen, had made a protest against the marriage, and had thereby renounced the privilege of the bull. Accordingly the pope was now asked to instruct the legatine court to find the bull invalid, if they were satisfied of the truth of these notorious facts. There was to be a solemn hearing of the case in England before two cardinals pledged to the king's cause, and so fettered by papal instructions that they could not escape giving a verdict adverse to the marriage. There could be no appeal upon a point of law, for the pope would have laid down the law in the commission. There could be no appeal upon the facts, for the facts were selected and indisputable.[1]

"The sick man on consulting a physician does not himself prescribe the medicine," said Simonetta, a noted canonist. Wolsey not only wrote out the prescriptions, but bullied the doctor. Gardiner, the king's secretary, and Edward Fox, the king's almoner, both tough men, versed in canon law, were sent out in February, 1528, to strengthen the assault already vigorously conducted by Lee, Knight, and Casale, but against overwhelming imperialist influences. In self-defence, and to avert a ruinous breach with Charles, Clement suggested every variety of compromise. The case might be submitted to the English bishops, or tried by Wolsey, in virtue of his legatine authority. The king might marry Anne Boleyn at once; anything rather than that the responsibility of the divorce should rest upon the head of the pope. Tears, protests, arguments were dashed aside by the English envoys, who had been instructed to threaten a general council and a falling away of the English obedience from Rome; and the mounting tide of French military success came opportunely to second their endeavours. In

[1] Ehses, *Römische Dokumente.*, pp. 21, 22.

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September, 1527, Lautrec took Alessandria and Pavia; by the beginning of April, 1528, he was practically master of the kingdom of Naples. In the sudden and unexpected eclipse of the imperialist arms, concession after concession was wrung from Clement. On April 13 a bull of commission was granted to Wolsey and Campeggio, cardinal protector of England, bishop of Salisbury, and likely therefore to favour the king's cause, which gave to the two cardinals power jointly and severally to hear the case, to declare the nullity of the marriage, to give to both Henry and Catharine licence to re-marry, and to legitimise the children by both marriages. It was specially provided in the commission that the competence of the legates could not be declined, that in case one legate was unwilling to give sentence or prevented from doing so, the decision of his colleague should be binding, and that against the judgment of the court no appeal could lie.[1]

This document was public, but not inconsistent with a full and open inquiry into the merits of the case, and therefore it fell short of Wolsey's expectations. The English envoys continued to press for a decretal commission, which meant, not a full and open inquiry, but a predetermined verdict, based upon a restricted selection of predetermined points. It was vouchsafed to them to learn the futility of driving a desperate, clever, and resourceful man along a path from which he was resolved to escape. Clement's conduct was not based upon pity for an injured wife, nor upon any chivalrous or sentimental feeling. He assured the English envoys over and over again that he would do what he could to forward their desires; he uttered no sound of righteous indignation. So far as his sympathies went, they were for Henry, the defender of the faith, rather than for Charles, who had permitted the sack of Rome. But he could not consent to a step which would fatally and publicly compromise the reputation of papal justice, ruin the prospects of European concord, and make irretrievable the breach between the papacy and the empire. "To avoid a labyrinth of judgments," he consented at last to draw up a decretal commission, but gave it into Campeggio's charge with secret and strict orders that it should not leave his hands, and that it should be

[1] Ehses, *Römische Dokumente*, pp. 33-36.

shown to no one save Wolsey and the king. He gave, besides, a written promise that he would not revoke or invalidate the decretal commission, but the document was undated and might be disavowed. His private instructions to Campeggio were that, in the first place, he should endeavour to divert the king from his purpose; that, if he failed with the king, he should attempt to induce the queen to take vows of religion; and that only in the event of failing with both king and queen was he to proceed deliberately by way of law. At the same time Charles was assured that though Campeggio was going to England, nothing should be done to the detriment of the queen, and that the whole case would be referred to Rome. CHAP. X.

In the first blaze of indignation Catharine charged Wolsey with being the author of her misfortune, and a long line of Catholic writers, from Reginald Pole downwards, have accepted the queen's word for it. There is no foundation for this theory. Wolsey adopted but did not originate the divorce.[1] Indeed it was easy to show that, apart from the arduous passages of diplomacy needful to bring it to a successful issue, the king's secret matter dealt a shattering blow to the whole fabric of Wolsey's policy. The cardinal was of course primarily the faithful servant of the king; but his conception of loyal service was embodied in large designs for the nation and the Church. Raised above the primate in virtue of the legatine position, which was first granted to him in 1518, and then after temporary renewals was made perpetual in 1524, and possessing therefore a unique measure of ecclesiastical authority, Wolsey was great enough to see that his exceptional powers might be utilised to reform the Church. It may be questioned whether he ever appreciated the depth of the Lutheran movement to which he was so bitterly opposed, nor is there any distinct sign in his correspondence that he apprehended the triumph of a protestant revolution. He was not a man of fine spiritual composition; he was no leader of a religious revival; but like all resolute and active natures he made war on sloth, waste, and inefficiency.

[1] Gairdner, "New Lights on the Divorce of Henry VIII.," *English Historical Review*, xi., 674. Dr. Busch, on the contrary, argues that Wolsey instilled into Henry the idea of divorcing Catharine in order to strengthen the French connexion, and then found to his dismay that the Boleyns were plotting to substitute Anne (*Historisches Taschenbuch*, 6te Folge, viii., 273-88).

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He issued a series of constitutions for his province of York, attempted to recall the Benedictine monks to the austere practices of earlier times; and threatened a general visitation of the monasteries.

Visitations, as Bishop Fox showed Wolsey, were of little avail to uproot corruption, and fresh statutes and constitutions were of no use unless they were observed. Wolsey had the acumen to perceive that a real reform could only be effected by improving the education of the clergy. An Oxford man himself, he took a deep and genuine interest in his university. He planned the foundation of seven new lectureships, named proctors and heads of houses, sent Juan Luis Vives, the eminent Spanish thinker, to teach rhetoric in the university, and in 1524 obtained from the pope permission to found a college out of the revenues of the monastery of St. Frideswyde in Oxford. His educational design was conceived upon the most magnificent scale. Twenty-two small monasteries were dissolved to provide funds for two colleges, one at Ipswich and the other at Oxford, which, bearing to one another the same relation as Eton does to King's College, Cambridge, or Winchester to New College, Oxford, were to serve as abiding memorials of their founder's greatness. The court, the cloister, the spacious dining hall of Cardinal's college were designed on a scale of splendour to which even Oxford was a stranger; nor was any detail in the labour of love too small for Wolsey's attention. He examined the accounts of the fabric, and prescribed the studies of the colleges. His schoolboys were to learn colloquial Italian and to read the great Latin authors; his undergraduates were to pass into the Church well grounded in divinity and the humanities. Nor was this the whole design. By the dissolution of the smaller houses he had opened out radical possibilities of reform; and a scheme for a further diversion of monastic wealth to the foundation of new cathedrals was pressed upon the Roman curia at the very moment when the relations between England and the papacy were already strained to bursting by the question of the divorce.

The year 1528 was one of intense anxiety for Wolsey, opening with murmurs of a shortage in corn and cattle, and marked with varied and ominous signals of peril to himself.

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On January 13, French and English heralds solemnly defied the emperor at Burgos, and commercial war broke out with the Netherlands. Du Bellay, the French ambassador, reported to his master that Wolsey was the only Englishman who wished for a war with Flanders, and that the London merchants refused to buy wool in order to stir discontent in the cloth industry, and had been summoned before the cardinal and rebuked for contumacy. Orders were sent down into the counties that no clothier was to discharge his men, but the discontent did not only affect the cloth trade. In May a small revolt broke out in Kent, caused, it would seem, by sheer hunger. The eastern counties complained that at a time of high prices they were deprived of their foreign mart for butter and cheese, red herrings and sprats. In addition to these evidences of the unpopular working of his anti-imperial policy, Wolsey received a terrible and unmistakable reminder of the instant necessity of settling the divorce. The summer of 1528 was rendered memorable by a visitation of the sweating sickness, more terrible perhaps in its scope and severity than any which had scourged the country during Henry's reign. "One has a little pain," wrote Du Bellay, "in the head and heart. Suddenly a sweat begins; and a physician is useless, for whether you wrap yourself up much or little, in four hours, sometimes in two or three, you are despatched without languishing."[1] Forty thousand persons were attacked in London. The disease made Greenwich and Eltham uninhabitable, ran through Wolsey's household, and drove Henry and his court from manor to manor. The Duke of Norfolk had the sweat, and several of his house died. Poynts, Carey, and Compton, three members of the king's intimate circle, were carried off by the plague, which assailed many other prominent members of the court, including Rochford and Anne Boleyn herself. At the Archbishop of Canterbury's house eighteen persons died in four hours. The king made his will, confessed himself every day, and received the sacrament at every festival. In the light of such evidence of the uncertainty of human life, the settlement of the succession became doubly pressing.

A little incident revealed to Wolsey that he could no longer

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 4391.

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rely upon the implicit trust of the king. Among the victims of the plague was the Abbess of Wilton, whose office Anne Boleyn desired to fill by the appointment of one of the nuns of the abbey, Eleanor Carey, sister of Anne's brother-in-law. Wolsey had promised her brother John Carey his good offices, but an inquiry held at Wilton revealed the fact that Dame Carey was a woman of abandoned character, who upon her own confession was the mother of two children. Wolsey proposed that the election should fall upon the prioress, Dame Isabel Jordan, who was at least advanced in years. The Boleyn faction replied by insinuations which they were unable to substantiate against the past of the prioress, and the king, through the medium of Dr. Bell, intimated to Wolsey that neither lady was suitable for the post. Either disbelieving the allegations against the prioress, or unaware that Bell was acting as his master's mouthpiece, Wolsey persevered in his nomination, and then alleged ignorance of Henry's intention. The king indited a long and weighty letter of reproof. "Ah, my lord, it is a double offence to do ill and colour it too, but with men that have wit it cannot be accepted so, wherefore, good my lord, use it no more that way with me, for there is no man living that more hateth it." And from the Wilton election Henry passed to an even graver topic. For the foundation of his colleges at Oxford and Ipswich Wolsey had not only procured the dissolution of small monasteries containing less than seven members, but had also extorted contributions from many of the wealthier religious foundations. The king was now informed that houses which had declared themselves too poor to contribute to the amicable loan had been mulcted successfully in the interests of Cardinal's college and Ipswich.

Wolsey, in a letter of humble submission, urged that his nomination of the prioress was only conditional on the king's consent, and that the assistance of the monasteries had been both slight and voluntary. Slight it may have been, voluntary it was not; but the apology was accepted. "Seeing the humbleness of your submission," wrote the king, "I am content to remit it and am glad that my warnings have been lovingly accepted. As touching the help of religious houses for your college, I would it were more if so be it were offered; but there is great murmuring at it throughout the realm among the good

and bad. They say that the college is a cloak for all mischief."[1] For the moment the old friendly relations were restored, for the king still leant on Wolsey to carry through the "secret matter". But Wolsey well knew that he was walking on the quicksands. The people hated the contriver of the war taxes, the author of the French alliance, the promoter of the divorce. The nobility were plotting his downfall. If the king's favour were withdrawn, he would sink without a hand to help. In a remarkable conversation with Du Bellay, in August, 1528, he spoke of all he had done against the opinion of all England and of what he was determined still to do, saying that "he required to use a terrible alchemy and dexterity in his affairs, for there were men who watched him so narrowly that they would take the first opportunity of calumniating him as being too strong a partisan of France".[2] One thing alone could save him, a prompt and successful termination of the king's matter.

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Leaving Italy at the end of July, when the fortunes of Spain were at their lowest, Campeggio voyaged northwards with calculated deliberation. It was the first week of October before he arrived in England, and by that time the military situation in Italy had been completely reversed. Lautrec was dead; Genoa had been won for the Spaniards; Doria, the admiral, had gone over with his galleys to the imperial side; and while the star of Charles was again in the ascendant, the very members of the league had turned against the pope. The Venetians had seized Ravenna and Cervia, which belonged to the holy see, and held them despite papal protests. The Duke of Ferrara occupied Modena and Reggio. Florence, abjuring the Medici, had declared for a republic. If the papal state were to be preserved, if the fortunes of the Medicean family were to be advanced, it behoved Clement to make peace with Charles. It was in the power of the emperor to offer terms which a pope and a Medici could not prudently decline.

Campeggio found Henry obstinate in purpose and established in doctrine. "His majesty," he reported after his first interview, "has so diligently studied the matter that I believe that in this case he knows more than a great theologian and canonist. He told me plainly that he wanted nothing else than

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 4507, 4509. [2] *Ibid.*, 4649.

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a declaration whether the marriage is valid or not, he himself always presupposing its invalidity, and I believe that an angel descending from Heaven would be unable to persuade him otherwise."[1] To the proposal that the queen should be induced to enter a religious house, Henry assented with extreme pleasure, expressing his willingness to act with generosity when the principal point should be secured. The queen should have her rank, her dowry, her rents, and the guardianship of her daughter, upon whom the succession should be settled by parliament in the event of the king's having no male heir by the second marriage. If Catharine could be moved to accept these terms, the scandal of a public trial might be avoided.

The woman whose energy had saved the north of England from havoc in the year of Flodden was not prepared to tarnish her good name by a pusillanimous renunciation of her wedded life. She told the legates that she was truly married, that she intended to live and die in the estate of matrimony to which God had called her, and that she would never change her opinion. She insisted that everything should be referred to the sentence, and that if the sentence went against her she should remain as free as the king. With indignant passion she told Campeggio that, though she might be torn limb from limb she would never alter her opinion, and that if after death she should return to life, rather than change she would prefer to die over again. The legates spoke of honour, of convenience, of benefit, of the peace of mind to be obtained in the chaste profession of living in the service of God. Wolsey went down upon his knees, but his prayers might have been addressed to a marble image. The queen, who had been agitated at the first interview, had recovered her composure when, on October 27, Campeggio and Wolsey renewed their entreaties. She replied that she would do nothing to the condemnation of her soul nor against God's laws, and that she would consult with her counsellors and then give an answer. Warham, Clerk, Fisher, West, Standish, and Vives had been assigned as her counsel.

In London popular sympathy ran strong and warm for Catharine, and Henry, always sensitive to the eddies of public opinion, judged that the moment had come for frank explana-

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 4858.

tion. Summoning the notable persons of the court and the city to Bridewell on November 8, he made a speech admirably calculated to quiet disturbed consciences and to silence the tongue of slander. His sense of dignity would not permit him to answer the common talk of the town, which attributed his action to a vulgar amour. He concluded with an elaborate panegyric of Catharine—"a woman of most gentleness, of most humility and buxomness, yea, and of all good qualities appertaining to nobility without comparison". He said that if it were adjudged that she was his lawful wife, "there was never thing more pleasant nor more acceptable to me in my life, both for the discharge and clearing of my conscience, and also for the good qualities and conditions which I know to be in her," and that if he were to marry again he would surely choose her above all others. He spoke mournfully of the possibility of a verdict adverse to his union with her. In dignified language he alluded to the perils which were likely to ensue if "our true heir be not known at the time of our death"; reminded his hearers alike of the troublous times of the White and Red Rose and of the twenty years of peace and prosperity which they had enjoyed under his own reign, "during which time we have so ordered us, thanked be God, that no outward enemy has oppressed you, nor taken anything from us, nor we have invaded no realm, but we have had some victory and honour, so that we think that you nor none of your predecessors never lived more quietly, more wealthy, nor in more estimation under any of our noble progenitors". After explaining how his scruples, first of all excited by the French ambassador, had been justified by "divers great clerks," the king urged his audience to declare the state of the case to the English people, and to invite their prayers that the truth might be known. He spoke with a feeling compounded of majesty and pathos, as a Christian bachelor mishandled by fate, and resolved to lay the domestic felicities upon the pitiless altar of his conscience and his statecraft.[1]

Campeggio's mission was harassing, but in one respect he confessed himself favoured by fortune. He was able to spin out time. His gout had excused a journey from Rome to

[1] Hall, *Chronicle of Hen. VIII.*, ii., 145-47.

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England, which had been protracted over a space of two months and a half, and in the course of October he became acquainted with a document which made further delay imperative. It was a copy of a brief alleged to have been sent by Julius II. to Queen Isabella of Castile on December 26, 1503, to quiet her scruples as to the legality of the marriage between Catharine and Henry. There are grave reasons to doubt the authenticity of this document, the dating of which was irregular, and which appears to have left no trace in the Vatican archives. But there was never from the first any doubt as to its supreme importance, for it was free from the technical objections to the bull upon which the king and his advisers had determined to rest their case. It was accordingly essential that the authenticity of the brief should be demolished before the opening of the trial, which was designed to exhibit the inadequacy of the bull. The most unscrupulous pressure was put upon the queen. A deputation headed by Warham, the Archbishop of Canterbury, actually had the effrontery to ask her whether she was implicated, as enemies alleged, in a conspiracy against the king's life. She was examined as to the date at which she became possessed of the copy of the brief, and parried her inquisitors with the lie which they deserved. She was compelled under oath to write to Charles for the original, and contrived to convey the intelligence that she was acting under orders.

Meanwhile Sir Francis Bryan and Peter Vannes were despatched to Rome to sow distrust between pope and emperor, to conduct an inquiry into the "great and apparent craft and delusion" of the brief, and to explore the possibilities of a licence for bigamy. A few days later Knight and Benet were on the same road, charged with arguments against the brief, and instructions to obtain a commission enabling the legates to declare it a forgery. It was a vain quest, for if the brief existed, Charles knew too much to give it up, and how could Clement condemn a document upon the interested testimony of one of the parties? If he did so the emperor might summon a general council, and all Germany might fall away from the Roman obedience. So far from granting fresh concessions to England, the pope was now anxious to efface the vestiges of his previous weakness. On December 15, he sent Francesco Campana, his

confidential secretary, to London to instruct Campeggio to destroy the decretal bull.

Could the pope be coerced? Wolsey knew Charles's intention to visit Italy, and was well aware that he could offer inducements which Clement would never decline. To avert so mischievous a conjunction of forces, he proposed to Du Bellay, the French ambassador, a comprehensive scheme, which might have the double effect of composing the variances of Europe, and of terminating the king's affair. The Venetians were to place Ravenna and Cervia in the hands of the Kings of France and England, who were to offer to the pope a guard or "presidy" of 2,000 men. A truce was to be proclaimed of a year and a half or two years, and that done, the pope should be drawn to Nice or Avignon to settle the terms of a universal peace in conjunction with the representatives of France, England, and the empire. It was convenient to represent the approaching imperial visit to Italy as a menace to papal freedom, calling for the joint action of Francis and Henry, and justifying the establishment of an Anglo-French bodyguard at the Vatican. But the scheme fell as flat in Paris as it did in Rome, and was soon effaced by exciting intelligence from Italy. On Epiphany, while celebrating mass, the pope was taken ill, so ill that on February 6 it was believed in England that he was actually dead. At once every nerve was exerted to secure the tiara for the cardinal of York. A schism in the Church would be preferable to the election of an imperialist, and Wolsey's agents in Rome were instructed to be lavish in bribes, promises, and assurances of military protection. It was reckoned during the conclave that, if six votes could be gained, the victory would be won.

But again Wolsey was disappointed of his supreme hope. Clement recovered, and as winter passed into spring it became clearer than ever that imperial influence was gaining ground in the curia. Argument failing, Gardiner had recourse to threats, hinting that if the pope were not compliant England would fall away to the Lutheran sect. To give cogency to the menace, Lutheran pamphlets advocating the spoliation of the Church and a return to apostolic poverty were allowed to circulate in the English court. "I told the king," wrote Campeggio, on April 3, 1529, "that this was the devil dressed in angel's garb

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in order that he might the more easily deceive. I represented that by councils and theologians it had been determined that the Church justly held her temporal goods. His majesty remarked that the Lutherans say that these decisions were arrived at by theologians, insinuating that it was now necessary for the laity to interpose," and then proceeded to advert upon the alleged wickedness of the court of Rome.[1] Meanwhile English agents were maintaining that if the English king were not so good a man, servants would not be wanting to poison Catharine. It was effort wasted. The pope did not believe the threats; declined to order Charles to send the brief to Rome; would not declare it a forgery unseen; would not grant an amplified commission to the legates. On April 21 Bryan wrote to the king that Clement could do nothing for him; yet something must be done and that quickly. Wolsey's stock of popularity was no larger than Anne Boleyn's stock of patience or Henry's stock of gratitude. He was hated in London, and the expulsion of some alien artisans in the early spring had not abated the odium of his policy. The king had begun to distrust his sincerity; Anne Boleyn, Norfolk, and Suffolk were busily attempting to subvert his credit. If the cause were revoked to Rome, he would fall. In the trust that if sentence were given in England, the verdict would be undisturbed in Italy, Wolsey determined to hasten on the proceedings of the legatine court.

The court opened at Blackfriars on May 31. Drs. Sampson and Bell appeared as counsel for the king; Clerk Bishop of Bath, Standish Bishop of St. Asaph, and Dr. Ridley for the queen. When the papal commission had been read, the legates ordered the king and queen to appear before them on June 18 between nine and ten in the morning, and this done, adjourned the court. On the 18th the queen appeared in person and protested against the competence of the legates. Wolsey was an English cardinal; Campeggio held an English bishopric, and the tribunal was exposed to overwhelming pressure from the king. On Monday, June 21, the court reassembled to announce its decision on the queen's protest. The king and queen were present in person. When the crier called upon Catharine, Queen of England, she rose from her chair without

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 5416.

an answer; mounted the dais and kneeling before the king addressed him in English broken with emotion. She appealed to his compassion as a poor woman and a stranger with no assured friend and much less indifferent counsel. She took God to witness that for twenty years she had always been a true, humble, and obedient wife, conformable to his will and pleasure, well pleased and contented in all things in which he had any delight. "When ye had me at the first," she continued, "I take God to be my Judge, I was a true maid without touch of man; and whether it be true or no I put to your conscience." Her marriage had been the work of Henry VII. and Ferdinand of Spain, "both wise and excellent kings in wisdom and princely behaviour". Wise and learned men had thought the marriage good and lawful. "Therefore it is a wonder to hear what new inventions are now invented against me that never intended but honestly." Subjects of the king taken out of the king's privy council had been appointed her advocates, but how could they dare to disobey the royal will to which they had been made privy? With the request that she might be spared "the extremity of this new court," and with a low courtesy to the king she left the hall. Cries of sympathy and encouragement went up from the women of the audience, and the effect of her speech and queenly demeanour were not lost upon Henry. "She hath been to me," said the king, "as true, as obedient, as conformable a wife as I could in my fantasy wish or desire. She hath all the virtuous qualities that ought to be in a woman of her dignity or in any other of baser estate." The cardinal then asked the king to contradict the rumour that he had been the inventor and first mover of the matter. "My lord cardinal," answered the king, who had a motive in clearing the legatine judges of complicity, "I can well excuse you herein. Marry, indeed, ye have been rather against me in attempting and setting forth thereof. And to put you out of all doubt, I will declare unto you the special cause that moved me thereunto; it was a certain scrupulosity that pricked my conscience upon divers words that were spoken at a certain time by the Bishop of Bayonne, the French King's ambassador."[1] CHAP. X.

The case dragged on from session to session. The queen

[1] Cavendish, *Life of Cardinal Wolsey*, pp. 119-22.

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refused to accept the tribunal, appealed to Rome, was adjudged contumacious. Disgusting evidence was given and accepted. Report of a speech, cogent it would seem and impassioned, delivered by Fisher in defence of the marriage was passed triumphantly from England to Italy and from Italy to Spain. Campeggio, who had been charged to procrastinate, and if the evidence went against the king, to declare the sentence boldly, remained proof against seductions. Equally firm was the queen. At last, on Friday, July 23, when there was a general expectation that sentence would be delivered, Campeggio pretending that the legatine court was part of the Roman consistory and must follow its rules, declared the proceedings adjourned until the close of the vacation on October 1. The party of the dukes, who had thought that victory was in their grasp, could not conceal their chagrin. "It was never merry in England," cried Suffolk vehemently, "whilst we had cardinals among us," with other contumelies addressed to Wolsey. "Sir," replied the cardinal, "of all men within this realm, ye have least cause to dispraise or be offended with cardinals; for if I, simple cardinal, had not been, you should have had at this present no head upon your shoulders."[1]

Perilous as was the adjournment, worse things yet were in store for Wolsey. His intelligence was capacious enough to discern that the divorce could not be isolated from the general scheme of European affairs, and that the predominant factors in the situation were not moral nor even legal, but military and diplomatic. The close co-operation of France had been as essential to his designs as the maintenance of the hostility between the papacy and the empire, until the moment for the conclusion of a general peace under English mediation. But now, in June, 1529, a meeting was arranged at Cambray between Louise the mother of the French king and Margaret the regent of the Netherlands, to settle the disputes between Francis and Charles; while at the same time the pope was drawing closer and closer to the Hapsburg house. On the 21st, a decisive imperial victory was won at Landriano, five miles from Pavia, over the Count of St. Pol. On the 29th a treaty was signed at Barcelona between Charles and Clement. On July 22

[1] Cavendish, *Life of Cardinal Wolsey*, pp. 129-30.

Wolsey learned that the pope had granted the avocation of the cause to Rome. It had been decided in the *signatura* on the 13th and passed in the consistory three days later. The King and the Queen of England were cited to appear in person or by proxy before the Roman curia. CHAP. X.

Whither had justice fled? Was this then the reward for Tournay and Thérouanne, for the pen which smote the Teuton heretic, for the sword which tamed the enemies of the Church? The defender of the faith was fooled by a mock trial, abased by a summons to a foreign court, while the man whose soldiery had twice violated the sacred places of the earth was installed as the ally and champion of the pope, the director of papal policy. It should never be said that the King of England was haled across Europe to plead in a Roman court. The kingdom was an empire, proud, independent, majestic, owning allegiance to no foreign power. From the pope the King of England would appeal to the parliament of the nation. There was a spirit abroad not very gentle to papal claims or clerical wealth, which under proper direction would find utterance in this assembly. The pope should learn that, if he had escaped a council, he had fallen upon something equally unpleasant. "It is intended," wrote Du Bellay on August 23, "to hold a parliament here this winter, and then act by their own absolute power in default of justice being administered by the pope in the divorce."[1] The writs had been issued on August 9, and parliament was to meet on November 3.

Henry would not appeal to parliament only. A young Cambridge divine, by name Thomas Cranmer, in a casual conversation at Waltham, in Essex, with Edward Fox, the almoner, and Stephen Gardiner, the secretary of the king, had suggested that the question of the divorce might be taken out of the hands of the lawyers and submitted to the arbitrament of the universities of Europe. The suggestion was reported to the king and favourably received. The young clergyman was summoned to London, lodged with the Earl of Wiltshire, Anne's father, in Durham Place, and charged to "pen his mind and opinion" upon the king's cause; and as it was expedient to be prompt, November saw Dr. Richard Croke, the famous Hellenist, on

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 5862.

CHAP. X. his way to Italy in search of writings which might tell in Henry's favour, and instructed to secure supporters among the pundits of Italy. Was there not a letter written far back in the fifth century by Basil of Cæsarea, which dealt with the awkward verse [16] in the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus? Dr. Stokesley, the Bishop of London, had a dim notion that he had heard of it, and that his learned friend might stumble across the commentary in some rich Italian library.

CHAPTER XI.

THE REFORMATION PARLIAMENT.

THE first important result of the imperialist victory at Rome was the fall of the cardinal. The circumstances of his degradation, the abrupt and startling contrast between what the man had been, and what he ultimately became, not only stamped itself upon the imagination of contemporaries as emblematic of Time's revenge upon insolence, but brought out into vivid relief the awful power of the monarchy. Abrupt as the descent was, it was not entirely precipitous. Wolsey was rich in resource, and both as a depository of knowledge and expedients and as a recipient of pensions from the French, might still be useful to the king. When in the middle of September Campeggio journeyed to Grafton in Northamptonshire to take leave of the king, Wolsey accompanied him, and to the surprise of his enemies was twice graciously received in audience. If the pest could slay Charles, if the decretal bull were to be found in Campeggio's luggage and could be abstracted, the cardinal might yet recover lost ground. But Charles lived on, his hold on Italy strengthened by the treaty of Cambray to which England acceded on August 27; and Campeggio's luggage was rifled by Henry's officers in vain.

Hearing of the failure of this device, and already conscious of his own powers of management, Henry determined to strike down the man whose prodigious energies had for the last fifteen years been expended in the royal service. On October 9 the king's attorney sued for a writ of *præmunire* against Wolsey, on the ground that his exercise of legatine authority was contrary to statute. He had received that authority with the king's full knowledge and with the king's active consent; he had used it to further the king's aims, and in pursuance of the

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king's injunctions. But Wolsey knew what things could be done under the letter of the law, and that his master had given him over to the wolves. He wrote a letter, not, as might have been expected, of indignant protest at the patent iniquity of the charge, but of abject submission and self-accusation. It was, however, irrevocably settled that he was to be removed from the control of affairs. "It is the intention of these lords," wrote Du Bellay, "when Wolsey is dead or destroyed to get rid of the Church and spoil the goods of both."[1]

On October 16 the cardinal was ordered to give up the great seal and to retire to Esher; but though the message was brought by Norfolk and Suffolk, his deadly enemies, the condemned man was slow to surrender hope. To his rivals all fiery pride, to the king he was all submission. He signed an indenture acknowledging that he had incurred the penalties of *præmunire* and that he deserved to suffer forfeiture and perpetual imprisonment. He had already surrendered to his master the splendid palace of Hampton Court; he now prepared an inventory of the plate and tapestry at York Place, that it might be delivered without defalcation to the king. On his way to Esher he was cheered by an encouraging message from the court. "Though the king," said Sir Henry Norris, "hath dealt with you unkindly as you suppose, he saith that it is for no displeasure he beareth you, but only to satisfy more the minds of some (which he knoweth be not your friends) than for any indignation." Wolsey alighted from his mule with the agility of youth, knelt in the autumnal mud of Putney, and holding his hands up to heaven rendered thanks to God and the king; but Du Bellay, who was watching the eddies of public opinion, predicted that his trouble would be sorer when parliament opened. Meanwhile Norfolk was made president and Suffolk vice-president of the council. The great seal was given to the most eminent layman in England, Sir Thomas More. Stephen Gardiner succeeded to the see of Winchester, which Wolsey was commanded to resign. While the new ministers were still untried, it would be unwise to ruin Wolsey entirely. Yet a London crowd had watched with deep disappointment the cardinal's barge make for Putney instead of for the Tower, and no news would have been more popular than the intelligence of his death.

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 6011.

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The parliament which met on November 3, 1529, was destined to carry out a series of changes more profound and wide-reaching than any which had yet been accomplished in the annals of English legislation. In the seven years of its existence it snapped the bonds which bound England to Rome, and established the royal supremacy over the English Church. It dissolved the smaller monasteries and initiated a redistribution of national wealth which in scale and significance surpassed anything of the kind since the land-settlement of the Norman conquest. It exalted the royal power to a pitch to which it had never previously attained, and it excited a protest which, but for the moderation of its leaders, would have endangered the throne. It determined articles of religious belief; it settled more than once the succession to the crown; it created new treasons and greatly abridged the liberty of the subject. It handled many grave social problems; such as mendicancy, which it attempted to stamp out by severity, and the economic revolution which was emptying cottages and extending sheep-runs. It passed an act which had the effect of obliterating that which was distinctive in the legal and administrative system of Wales; and working in an atmosphere of projects and projectors, it considered some far-reaching plans, such as the abolition of entails, which it did not carry out. We have reached one of the few epoch-making periods in the history of English legislation.

Eustace Chapuys, the brilliant Swiss envoy of the imperial court in London, repeating the voice of the queen's circle, affirmed more than once that the reformation parliament was packed or bribed by the crown. A letter from Gardiner to Wolsey proves that Henry was interested in the choice of candidates for the shires of Nottingham and Derby, Bedford and Buckingham, Hampshire, and the town of Southampton. The king wrote with his own hand to the borough of Colchester, requesting the corporation to return a candidate whom he had nominated: and Richard Hall, the biographer of Bishop Fisher, states that every writ was accompanied by a private letter from one or other of the king's council, directing the choice of the electors. That the majority of the house consisted of crown officials is admitted by the most protestant of contemporary chroniclers. Yet even so the parliament of 1529, though it may have contained "serving men, parasites, and flatterers lightly apparelled

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in short cloaks and swords," twice threw out the Bill of Uses, a measure actively promoted in the fiscal interest of the crown. It was not an assembly of slaves, but a body roughly representative of an orthodox, priest-hating, crown-loving nation.[1]

In summoning parliament to his aid Henry was doubtless aware that a genuine feeling existed in many parts of the country, and more especially in the capital, against the claims and conduct of the spirituality. "Nearly all the people here," wrote Chapuys on December 13, 1529, "hate the priests," [2] and this hatred was no passing outburst of petulance. A temperate and orthodox writer, the lawyer St. Germain, in a treatise upon the division between the spirituality and temporality, composed in 1531, assumes this antagonism between the two halves of English society as a notorious fact, explains the causes to which it may be attributed, and suggests the means by which harmony may be restored. He speaks of the secularity, negligence, and misconduct of the clergy, of the chaplains who are compelled by their employers to hunt and hawk, to wear gay liveries, to act as bailiffs, receivers, or stewards, to go upon the errands of the noble lord, when they should be intoning in the village choir, and who ultimately, "when the inward devotion of the heart becomes cold," are put into a benefice and expected to give spiritual consolation to human souls. For this particular class of abuse the lay aristocracy were even more to blame than the clergy. They selfishly sacrificed the interests of their poor parishioners in order that they might reward their comrade in sport or the serviceable creature who added up their accounts, valued their timber, paid their bills, and interviewed their farm servants. But there were causes of division, the responsibility for which lay more clearly with the spiritual estate itself. "There is great rumour," writes St. Germain, "among the people that the heresy laws are used to oppress those who speak against the worldly power or riches of spiritual men." It is probable that Sir Thomas More is correct in his surmise that save in London and the diocese of Lincoln a trial on a charge

[1] *Cal. State Papers, Spain*, iv., 160, 228, 252; *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 5993; Porritt, *The Unreformed House of Commons*, 1, 371, 2; Hall's *Chronicle*, ii., 169. Hall's *Life of Fisher* was written in England probably before 1559. His criticism of the parliamentary costume is quoted by Bridgett, *Blessed Fisher*, p. 180.

[2] *Cal. State Papers, Spain*, iv., 232.

of heresy was rare, and a burning altogether exceptional.[1] But the procedure in a trial for heresy, though defended by More as no more inquisitorial than the procedure of the courts of common law, was open to gross abuse. A man might be brought upon a light suspicion before the ordinary; the bishop or his official might direct that the names of the accusers or witnesses should not be shown him, and if notably suspected he would be compelled to purge himself after the will of the ordinary or be accursed. CHAP. XI.

Another and more pervasive source of irritation was provided by the mortuary dues. They were exacted not only from the fathers of families, but from wives, servants, and children. Curates would compel poor men to sell their goods in time of sickness, "if there were such goods as were like to be their mortuaries". If a man died in one parish and had a household in another, a mortuary would be claimed in both places, and until the mortuary was paid the curate would decline to bury the body. Nor was there any sign that the evil was abating. Mortuaries were now claimed in many places where they had been previously unknown, and they were "taken in such a manner that it made the people to think that the curates loved their mortuaries better than their lives". The clerical tithe was a grievance hardly less resented. "In some places is asked, as it is said, tithe both of chickens and eggs, and in some places of milk and cheese, and in some places the tenth part of the ground and also of that that falleth on the ground. And in some places is claimed tithe of servants' wages without deduction. And it is but in few places that any servant shall go quit without some tithe payment, though he hath spent all in sickness or upon his father and mother and such necessary expenses." As no prescriptive custom or composition was admitted in the spiritual courts as a bar to the exaction of tithe, these harassing dues were sometimes exacted in places where they had long ceased to be paid and had possibly been commuted. It was complained that the curates exacted increased payments at marriages, burials, and obits, and that they refused to housel parishioners who owed them money.

[1] *Apologie*, c. xxv., p. 156; c. xxxv., pp. 189, 192. The Bishops' Registers of Winchester, Durham, Exeter, Hereford, and Bath and Wells appear to confirm More's statement.

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Nothing was more calculated to bring the clergy into discredit, than the fact that this covetous conduct, though by no means universal, was not actively reprobated by those in authority. St. Germain acutely remarks that one of the great obstacles to the reformation of the Church was the solidarity of its corporate spirit. The priests stick together and defend what is bad and obsolete as well as what is good and wholesome. The whole episcopal body was for benefit of clergy, though the privilege clearly tended towards encouraging breaches of the peace. Every monk championed his own order. *Esprit de corps*, always a doubtful virtue, becomes positively dangerous when gross abuses have to be redressed. That there were such abuses was the general belief of the laity, who resented the taint of venality which infected the whole ecclesiastical system, the sale of pardons and licences, the pomp and worldly behaviour of the episcopal visitations, conjectured to be undertaken rather that the visitor might draw his pension, than that the monastery or college might be reformed, and "the great laxity and liberty of living that people have seen in many religious men". Public opinion demanded that these faults should forthwith be amended.

To the anti-sacerdotal elements in the spirit of his people Henry now made appeal. He had not decided to break with the pope; indeed his anxiety for the support of papal authority may be gauged by the audacity and magnitude of the plan which he conceived for extorting it. Still less did he contemplate any alterations in the foundations of religious belief. But he was of opinion that his case was good, and that the pope might be frightened into concessions by the menace of the withdrawal of the English obedience to Rome. Experience had proved that the pleas of the English envoys weighed light in the balance against the sword of the empire. It was time to show that the English nation was behind the king, that the clergy were as submissive to his will as the parliament, and that the attack upon the Roman position in England had seriously begun.

For the execution and perhaps also for the conception of his scheme Henry was greatly indebted to Thomas Cromwell. The son of an ill-conditioned Putney blacksmith, Cromwell had pushed his way to fortune by a combination of courage, skill, assiduity, and a convenient absence of scruple. He had tra-

velled in Flanders and Italy; had been a trooper, a merchant, an accountant, a solicitor. At least as late as 1524 he drove a business in cloth and wool. He was a money-lender on a large scale; and even while directing the affairs of state, he continued to transact the legal business and to relieve the pecuniary necessities of a wide and extending circle of clients. If a debt had to be collected, a title to be established, a property to be surveyed, no one could do the work more promptly or efficiently than Thomas Cromwell. At some date, possibly as early as 1513 and certainly not later than 1520, this astute lawyer and man of all work attracted the notice of Cardinal Wolsey. Then his fortune was made. He entered the parliament of 1523, and two years later was one of the commissioners named by Wolsey for the suppression of certain small monasteries. CHAP. XI.

Here his peculiar business aptitudes found a congenial scope. He was swift, ruthless, accurate, corrupt, a master of detail and inaccessible to sentiment. So zealously had he entered upon his patron's business that it was a common conjecture and not an uncommon hope that the servant would be involved in the master's fall. But Cromwell disengaged himself from a difficult situation with an adroitness worthy of Italian diplomacy. While giving useful advice to Wolsey, he paid instant and successful court to Norfolk. By Norfolk's influence he was elected to parliament for the borough of Taunton and was bound over to promote the king's intentions. Here he had an opportunity of defending his former patron, most probably in accordance with instructions from the crown, while at the same time by a singular conjunction of circumstances he was able to conciliate Wolsey's enemies. The cardinal was in disgrace, but he could still dispense fees and annuities and confirm grants made by the crown from his confiscated lands. Cromwell was the man through whom the cardinal's favours flowed, a centre of patronage, a source of security. He was besieged with suitors, and by a deft distribution of gifts and pensions established his influence with the ruling faction at the court.

Did Cromwell persuade the king to break with Rome? Reginald Pole, who knew the man and his friends, says that in conversation at least they made no concealment of their desire to abolish the papal power, to spoil the monks, and to exalt the monarchy at the expense of the Church. Yet it is not until

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1533 that Chapuys became alive to the fact that Cromwell was all-powerful with the king and the real director of English policy. This would not in itself be inconsistent with a period of earlier and concealed influence, an hypothesis borne out by the fact that as early as October, 1530, Cromwell was clearly in the secrets of the court. For such concealment, if indeed it was the result of conscious contrivance, motives may easily be imagined, both upon the side of Cromwell and upon that of his master. Great innovations demanded high sanction; and if the pope was to be driven to his knees, his subjection must be accomplished by the king alone. To have associated the name of an obscure and unpopular lawyer with the initiation of a policy which uprooted so many ancient and respected things, would be to court additional unpopularity and gratuitous danger. For three years every one believed that the policy of the country was shaped by the king. For the next seven years there is no matter of important public interest which does not pass through Cromwell's hands.

If Cromwell did not plan the substance, at least he moulded the form of legislation, and contrived that it should be carried into effect. "A few words," he used to say, "from an experienced man are worth volumes and volumes of philosophers."[1] He saw life through plain glass, spurned ethics and sentiment, and set the *Prince* of Machiavelli above the *Republic* of Plato. Sly, cruel, greedy, yet not without the witty and agreeable converse of a man of the world, he drove straight to his end, steeling the will and steadying the course of his royal master. Wealth was power, and Cromwell declared that he would make Henry the richest prince in Christendom. Such a promise was the surest avenue to the royal heart. Yet he entered upon the task with more than a mere time-server's interest. In the power and privileges of the Roman Church he saw a series of obstacles to absolute monarchy; in Roman catholic culture he discerned a form of obscurantism injurious to the intellectual freedom with which Italy had acquainted him. He was a new man, and men of his class were drifting into Lutheranism, a creed which had hitherto escaped the patronage of the aristocracy. Cromwell had no spark of religious zeal, though he would complain that the Gospels had

[1] Pole, *Apologia ad Cæsarem*, c. xxviii.

been "obscured by the malice of the priests," and express his burning desire to see the doctrine of Christ restored "to its primitive candour and sincerity" by the authority of the king. But if he would not formally accept Lutheranism, neither would he exclude it; and he was perhaps pleased with the thought that by the surreptitious and careful encouragement of heretics he was causing embarrassment to the nobility, who were his deadly enemies and the zealous defenders of the orthodox faith. CHAP. XI.

It was generally understood that parliament was summoned to deal with the "enormities of the clergy," and the opening speech of the new chancellor, Sir Thomas More, must have been awaited with some anxiety by members of the threatened order. The theme of the oration was not unnaturally supplied by the fall of the cardinal, "the great wether" which the king, like a good shepherd, had separated from the sound sheep. The effect must have been to deepen rather than to alleviate forebodings; for while the offences of the cardinal were nowhere defined, the audience was solemnly warned, as from the king, that future transgressions of the same nature would not escape with such gentle correction. The commons at once proceeded to fall upon the abuses of the Church. Sir Henry Guildford, the king's controller, declared that as executor to Sir William Compton, he had paid 1,000 marks sterling as probate duty to the cardinal and the Archbishop of Canterbury. His complaint was re-echoed from many quarters. Every member who could contribute an experience of an extortionate probate or mortuary due, every member who could tell of a beneficed ignoramus or a starving scholar, of a non-resident pluralist or a priestly sycophant in the halls of the mighty, of an abbot who kept a tannery and traded in wool, of a large ecclesiastical estate managed and administered upon strict economical principles by hard-fisted ecclesiastical surveyors or stewards, had now an opportunity of ventilating his grievance in speech or writing. After a debate which seems to have been animated, three committees were appointed to draft bills, one for the probate of wills, another for mortuaries, and a third for non-residence, pluralities, and the farming of Church lands by spiritual men.

The burgesses of the commons' house may have been anti-sacerdotal, but they were not unorthodox. "My lords," said the Bishop of Rochester in the upper house, "you see daily

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what bills come hither from the common house and all is to the destruction of the Church. For God's sake see what a realm the kingdom of Boheme was, and when the Church fell down there fell the glory of the kingdom. Now with the commons is nothing but Down with the Church and all this meseemeth is for lack of faith only." The commons deeply resented the imputation of heresy, and after a long debate sent Sir Thomas Audeley, their speaker, to the king to protest against the indignity which had been put upon them. Fisher explained that his words had been misunderstood, and the commons were compelled to accept his explanation. But the discussion of the mortuary and probate bills continued to excite lively differences in the mixed committees of lords and commons to which they were now entrusted; and it was only after the king's interposition that bills were drafted which obtained the reluctant assent of the upper house.

No mortuary should be taken of any person who at the time of his death should have less than ten marks in movables, nor except where the payment had been usual, nor in more places than one; and the amount of the duty was defined and graduated according to the wealth of the deceased. A second statute fixed the fees for the probate of wills and enacted penalties for undue charges. A third dealt with the complicated and important question of pluralities, non-residence, and the taking to farm of lands and tenements by spiritual persons. These practices were condemned, but with many important reservations intended to safeguard vested interests, or to conserve what were regarded as valuable features in the existing structure of society. Pluralities were prohibited, but persons possessing many benefices before the act might retain four after it. Members of the king's council could purchase a licence to hold three, royal chaplains, doctors and bachelors of divinity, doctors of law and bachelors of the canon law to hold two livings, while lay-peers, archbishops, and bishops were each entitled to one beneficed chaplain. Non-residence was prohibited and a fine of £10 sterling was imposed upon any spiritual person who should be absent for one continuous month or for two months in all from his prebend or benefice; but a liberal list of exceptions was appended, and persons engaged upon the king's service, pilgrims, chaplains and scholars at the university were exempted from the opera-

tions of the law. It was made a penal offence to seek a licence from Rome to evade the provisions of the act. CHAP. XI.

It would have been chimerical at this stage to prohibit an abbot or prelate from managing his property altogether, more especially as it was still regarded as essential that prelates and abbots should exercise hospitality. The act, which intended to promote the transfer of ecclesiastical property to laymen, attempted to draw a fine distinction between sales made for the purposes of lucre and sales made for the purpose of maintenance and hospitality. It was lawful for a spiritual person or corporation to sell corn or cattle in order to maintain the accustomed standard of housekeeping and hospitality; unlawful to go into the market as a trader for gain. It was lawful for an abbey to own estates, unlawful to lease out its farms to spiritual persons. Yet despite all these reservations, no bolder onslaught had been made upon the English Church system since the reign of Henry IV. The spiritual lords in the upper house resisted it with energy, and if events had been allowed to take a constitutional course, their opposition would have resulted in the disappearance of the bill. Events were not allowed to take their course. The king was determined that the bill should pass, and ordered a joint committee of lords and commons into the Star-chamber to debate it. The prelates were induced to withdraw their opposition, and the last of the three great measures against the Church passed into law.

The attack against the outworks had succeeded. The pope, whose power of licensing pluralities had been limited, might now know that the king was in earnest; the Church might learn that the king was powerful; and the commons might congratulate themselves upon having worsted the priests in the first engagement. In his management of parliamentary business Henry showed no little dexterity. He had decided to repudiate his wife and he intended to ask parliament to wipe out his debts, and both projects were as unpopular at Westminster as they were in the country at large. He diverted attention from the divorce by inviting parliament to discuss the reformation of the Church; he prefaced the loan-bill by a magnificent reference to the "inestimable" costs and charges incurred in the extinction of schism, the promotion of the balance of power, and the protection of the realm. He pleased the enemies of Wolsey by

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allowing a bill of preposterous charges to be passed against him in the lords; he secured a name for generosity by permitting it to be thrown out in the commons. When feeling was sore about forced repudiation, he came forward with timely emollients. He would grant a general pardon to his subjects for offences other than felonies; he would help to smooth the passage of ecclesiastical legislation through the lords. The men who wished ill to the Church saw in him the huntsman who halloes the pack to its quarry. When parliament was prorogued on December 17, the first step had been taken towards the subjection of the clergy.

Whether or no the matter should go further, whether the power of the pope should be abolished and the Church subjected to the uncontested control of the monarchy, was an issue depending upon the action of the curia in the great matrimonial cause. In January, 1530, a solemn embassy, headed by the father of Anne, now promoted to be Earl of Wiltshire, and fortified by the learning of Stokesley and Lee, was despatched to Bologna to see what could be done with the pope. Clement was engaged in placing the imperial crown upon the head of Charles, and a coronation is not a propitious moment for unpleasant business. Wiltshire found that the pope was governed by the emperor and that the Italian divines would support the pope. The salvoes of canonical authority were discharged in vain, and at the suggestion of the emperor's minister a writ of citation to appear before the Roman court upon Queen Catharine's appeal was served upon Wiltshire, as representing the person of the king. The trial could now proceed at Rome, and if it proceeded, there was little question as to what the verdict would be. At the request of the English ambassador Clement consented to postpone the opening of proceedings for six weeks. Delay was as convenient for him as it was essential to Henry.

Meanwhile the suffrages of the learned were sedulously courted at home and abroad. In February Gardiner and Fox were despatched to Cambridge to obtain an opinion favourable to the king's cause from their old university. They found a temper which was neither calm, docile, nor united. As early as 1521 a small band of Cambridge men had begun to meet at the White Horse Tavern in order to discuss the new theology. The tavern became known as "Germany," and its frequenters as

Germans, and nowhere in England did the seed of Lutheranism fall upon more receptive soil. Tyndale, Coverdale, Cranmer, Latimer, Bilney, Barnes, Crome, and Lambert, all the leaders of the early reformation movement in England, were Cambridge men and belonged to this circle. It was not unnatural that in the presence of a bold and heterodox minority, the tranquillity of old-fashioned thinkers should be ruffled by indignation and alarm. While the sky was still clear over other country towns, the storm of the great debate had settled over Cambridge, and Latimer's bold denunciations from the pulpit of St. John's chapel excited vehement protest and no little disturbance. CHAP. XI.

To the orthodox the king's design appeared to favour all these tendencies, which to them were most abhorrent. They knew that Queen Catharine was a catholic; they believed that the Lady Anne was more than half a heretic, and they had an uneasy suspicion that the verdict which they were required to pronounce was not only in itself immoral, but dangerous to the cause of sound religion and derogatory to the authority of the vicar of Christ. In these circumstances it was necessary for the royal commissioners to exercise some strategy, and with the valuable assistance of the vice-chancellor they scored a Pyrrhic victory. Finding that the congregation of doctors, bachelors of divinity, and masters of arts was turbulent and impracticable, they obtained, but not before two divisions had been taken, permission to refer the matter to a committee of twenty-nine persons, and to fix the seal of the university to their decision. The committee was not unanimous, but the required two-thirds majority was obtained for the thesis that it was contrary to natural and divine law to marry the childless widow of a deceased brother. The proposition was less ample in connotation than might have been expected; but it was not improbably planed down to smooth its passage through an obstructive and reluctant medium. In Oxford the course of events was not dissimilar. There was the same opposition, the same reference to a committee, the same result. It was observed, however, that while the masters of arts were for the most part opposed to the resolution, the doctors and heads of houses were eager to earn the favours of the court by promoting it. On April 4, 1530, by a narrow majority of twenty-seven to twenty-two votes, the university of Oxford decided for the king.

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Viewed in the dry light of canonical science there was much to be said on both sides. If it was true that the precepts of Leviticus still obliged Christians, and if it was also true that the pope's dispensation could have no force against the law of God, then it followed by a logical necessity that the king's marriage with Catharine was unlawful, and that the pope had no authority to sanction it. If, on the other hand, it was contended that the law of Leviticus was abrogated or limited by the injunction in Deuteronomy (xxv. 5), then it followed with equal strictness that God's law had not been violated by Julius II., that the dispensation was good, and that Henry's marriage was valid and indissoluble. The king's case was that the tables in Leviticus were absolutely binding; that the law of Deuteronomy was conditional; that it was observed neither by Christians nor Jews; that a distinction must be drawn between the judicial laws of the Old Testament and the divine laws, and that while the precept in Deuteronomy belonged to the first category, the law of Leviticus belonged to the second.

The question, however, was far too intricately involved in secular and ecclesiastical politics to be viewed in the dry light of canonical science. The influence of Francis I. was solicited and exerted to promote Henry's cause with the French divines, and in the course of the summer favourable opinions were duly obtained from the doctors of Paris, Orleans, Angers, Bourges, and Toulouse. In Italy the battle of the books was waged with varying fortunes, and characterised by many brisk and humorous passages and encounters. The Neapolitans were under the imperial thumb and gave a solid vote for Deuteronomy. The curia was besieged by the imperial ambassador who told the pope that it was intolerable that college divines and canonists should invade his province, and pressed for a brief forbidding the universities to write upon the question in their corporate capacity. "We can do more," wrote Mai confidently to Charles V., "with a thousand ducats than they can do with twenty-five thousand."[1] The Bishop of Vaison, the papal major-domo, took the field for Catharine, and descending upon Vicenza, burnt a bill for Leviticus signed by nine local doctors. On the one side, a library catalogue was forged

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 6478.

in order to throw the Englishman off the scent of a Greek father; on the other, needy rabbis were fished out of their ghettos to opine against Deuteronomy at a minimum charge of twenty-four crowns. It is not necessary to suppose that all the learned men were dishonest, though the atmosphere was not favourable to strict scientific integrity. Stokesley prided himself that the five best doctors in Italy had declared for the king, and that the theologians of Bologna were so well affected to his cause that they would take no reward for supporting it. By June 22 Croke had secured 110 subscriptions. On July 1 the university of Padua came down on the English side. Two universities and a miscellaneous collection of Jews, friars, doctors in divinity, and jurists were the result of the Italian campaign. It is needless to add that the Spanish universities gave their verdict for the Spanish queen. Germany was vainly reconnoitred, for the Lutheran divines held lax views as to marriage and saw no objection to a union such as Henry had contracted. CHAP. XI.

Who could now say that the defender of the faith was not conscientious, that he did not take infinite pains to secure the support of the Christian conscience and the Christian brain? Nor should it be open for the critic to allege that the defender had ceased to defend. Henry was orthodox, prided himself in his orthodoxy, and wished to show the world that the interests of the true faith were safe in his hands. When it was necessary to frighten the pope, he would hint not obscurely of schism, give rope to the Lutheran pamphleteers and printers, and create an impression that he favoured the new learning. But when it was expedient to impress Europe, then he could be superbly correct—a scourge of heresy and a pillar of doctrine. In the spring of 1530 the wide diffusion of Lutheran writings, and specially of William Tyndale's translations of the Scriptures with their polemical commentaries, had made the treatment of heresy an urgent question. Bishop Nix of Norwich wrote to the Duke of Norfolk on May 14, that he was encumbered by those who read and keep these erroneous books in English and believe and teach them; that he had done what he could to suppress them; but that it passed his power; that many of his diocese said openly that the king favoured such books, and that it was his pleasure that the New Testament should be published in English. So far, however, the evil had not greatly affected

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the gentry or the commonalty; but it was rife among the merchants, and in the seaports.[1] Ten days before this letter was written Henry had already summoned a joint committee of Oxford and Cambridge divines to examine "certain English books commonly read among the people and containing erroneous and pestiferous words, sentences, and conclusions," and to consider whether it was necessary to have the Bible in English. A list of prohibited books was issued; the versions of Tyndale were burnt in St. Paul's Churchyard; and officers of the crown were commanded upon taking office to swear an oath that they would assist the bishops in the extirpation of heresy. No person was hereafter to print new books in English concerning the Holy Scripture until they had been examined by the ordinary. The question of an English Bible was discussed by the committee, and it was recommended that "considering the malignity of the present time" an English version of the Scriptures could not wisely be entrusted to the hands of the common people. If, however, corrupt translations were exterminated, if people should abandon their perverse opinions, "his highness intended to provide that the Holy Scripture should be by great, learned, and catholic persons translated into the English tongue". The eyes of Europe were on Henry, and Campeggio wrote on June 25 from the synod of Augsburg, where the battle of the creeds was being waged, that by his recent demonstration he had added to his renown and strengthened others in the faith.[2]

It is significant of Henry's reluctance to break away from the old moorings, that despite an almost uninterrupted catalogue of rebuffs he continued to exert diplomatic pressure upon the pope. In July a petition went forth in the name of the spiritual and temporal lords and subscribed by the signatures of no less than twenty-three abbots, praying that Clement might speedily give a decision in the king's favour. The pope replied in a dignified negative to an improper request obviously concocted under royal pressure; and it was necessary to find some other means of bringing him to reason. In the hope that the pontiff might concede to the joint representatives of France and England what he had refused to grant to Henry alone, the assistance of Francis was invoked in the cause. Early in October the Cardinal de Tarbes, Benet, and Ghinucci interviewed Clement

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, iv., 6385. [2] *Ibid.*, 6480.

and presented three proposals, all of which were pronounced inadmissible. Clement would neither grant a commission to the Archbishop of Canterbury to try the case, nor yet to the clergy of his province; nor would he undertake to refrain from molesting the king with censures if he should provide a remedy according to means approved by the learned men in the universities of Christendom. He said briefly that Catharine had appealed to him, and that he could not refuse process according to law. French diplomacy was added to the long list of expedients which had failed; but there was a surprise yet for the pope in Henry's cornucopia. CHAP. XI

Before that surprise was revealed, and while yet England remained a faithful member of the Roman communion, the great cardinal passed away. The last year of his life had been marked by surprising vicissitudes. In January he was at Esher, ill, disgraced, impoverished, and but freshly relieved from the perils of attainder. On February 12 he received a full pardon from the king, and on February 14 he was restored to the archbishopric of York. From June to November he was in his diocese, engaged in the simple and wholesome activities of the office which he had neglected, riding from parish to parish, restoring churches, allaying feuds, saying mass before rustic audiences, confirming the children of the poor. But his heart was not satisfied by a pastoral exile. He had lived in the great world and yearned to return to it, and it was bitter to him that the machinery of power which he had so long controlled should have passed into the hands of his deadly enemies. With singular unwisdom he entered into communications with the French and imperial ambassadors, while the camarilla which surrounded Anne Boleyn was still trembling with the fear that the king, who openly regretted the loss of his capacity, should even yet recall him to the council board. The intrigue came to the ears of Norfolk, and Henry gave orders that Wolsey should be arrested and brought to his trial for high treason. "If I may come to my answer," said Wolsey to George Cavendish his secretary, "I fear no man alive;" but to his answer he never came. While his enemies were fabricating a case against him out of the revelations of Augustino, his confidant and physician, the cardinal voyaged slowly towards London, afflicted with dysentery and stricken in spirit. The king seems to have been informed

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that he "had written to Rome to be reinstated in his possessions and to France for its favour, and was returning to his ancient pomp and corrupting the people"; and revelations were obtained from Augustino of an even more damaging and improbable character. The Venetian, who had journeyed uncomfortably from Cawood to the Tower of London under the belly of a horse, said what was most calculated to gratify his master's enemies—that Wolsey had prayed the pope to excommunicate Henry if he did not banish Anne from court and treat the queen with due respect; and stirred to new anger by these or similar tidings, Henry sent Sir William Kingston with some yeomen of the guard to Sheffield to conduct Wolsey to the Tower. "Master Kingston," said Wolsey to the constable of the Tower, "all these comfortable words which ye have spoken be but for a purpose to bring me into a fool's paradise: I know what is provided for me." The shock proved fatal, and at Leicester Abbey on November 29 the cardinal relieved his foes of all further perplexity.

Henry received the news without emotion. He had already despoiled his old servant of his London house, and of the colleges which were intended to perpetuate the memory of his munificence to future ages. He was now anxious to discover and secretly appropriate a sum of £1,500, the paltry residue of Wolsey's fortune. The merriment of the court was as indecent as the greed and ingratitude of the monarch. A farce was written "Of the Descent of the Cardinal into Hell," played at the Earl of Wiltshire's, and printed and published by order of the Duke of Norfolk. The star of Anne was in the ascendant. "I have just heard," wrote Chapuys to the Emperor, on January 1, 1531, "that this marriage will undoubtedly be accomplished in this parliament and that they expect easily to pacify your Majesty. The Lady is full assured of it. She is braver than a lion. She said to one of the queen's ladies that she wished all the Spaniards in the world were in the sea."[1] There was good reason for confidence. A plot had been devised in the course of the autumn which could hardly fail to bring the issue to a conclusion.

[1] *Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII.*, v., 24.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BREACH WITH ROME.

IN December, 1530, the attorney-general filed in the court of king's bench an information against the whole body of the clergy for having violated the statutes of provisors and *præmunire* by recognising the legatine authority of Cardinal Wolsey. It was clear that Wolsey would never have accepted the office without the king's concurrence, and that Henry, by permitting the legatine court to be set up and by bringing his matrimonial affairs before it, had committed an even graver offence than that now attributed to the clergy. Again, granted that the recognition of a legate had contravened the acts, which was more than doubtful, it could be argued that they had been passed with a provision that the king might suspend them by letters patent, and that the royal recognition was equivalent to such a suspension. Lastly, if the clergy were guilty, so too was every layman who had brought a case into the legatine court. But the clergy were well aware that argument was irrelevant to a case governed by considerations of force and fraud. The primary object of the royal device was to wring money from the Church, in view of a possible war with Spain. The two convocations were given to understand that they might compound for their error by substantial supplies, and on January 24, 1531, a sum of £100,044 8s. 4d. was voted by the convocation of Canterbury, and accompanied by expressions of adulation and gratitude. But money, though the principal, was not the only object of the manœuvre. On February 7 several judges and privy councillors presented themselves in the chapter-house of Westminster, and declared that the subsidy could not be accepted by the king, unless the clergy were willing to recognise that he was "the sole protector and supreme head of the Church and clergy of England," and that the cure of souls was committed to his majesty.

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It is to the credit of the convocation that they did not allow this claim to pass without contest. For three sittings the upper house debated the new title without coming to a conclusion. The king sent Anne Boleyn's brother, Viscount Rochford, to suggest a form of words "Supreme Head after God" which did not, however, prove to be acceptable. At last, on February 11, Warham proposed that they should acknowledge the king to be "their singular protector, only and supreme lord, and, as far as the law of Christ allows, even Supreme Head". The cumbrous title was received in gloomy silence. "Whoever is silent seems to consent," said the archbishop. "Then are we all silent," said a voice, and the clause passed. It was conceded that the indemnity should be reduced to a round sum of £100,000 payable in five annual instalments; and it became the next object of the crown to arrange for the indemnity of the northern province. Here Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, had raised his voice against the new title, as liable to be perverted to scandalous meanings. His protest received an answer from Henry himself couched in reassuring phrases, and the convocation of York, swallowing hard necessity, for a sum of £18,840 purchased their pardon from the *præmunire*.

Henry had been coming to the conclusion that he could and might be pope in England. On March 22, Chapuys reported that the king, taking in his hands a roll containing articles of heresy objected against a certain preacher, noticed that he had denied that the pope was head of the Christian Church. "That," he said, "ought not to be entered among the heresies, for it is quite certain and true!"[1] Wiltshire told the Bishop of Rochester that he could prove from Scripture that when God left this earth he left no successor or vicar behind him. Chapuys reported that Sir Thomas More was so mortified with the new title that he was anxious to resign the seals, and spoke of the king as practically pope; but when the nuncio expostulated with the "new papacy," Henry with rare candour explained that it was not intended to infringe the authority of the pope, provided that his holiness paid due regard to his wishes. Meanwhile he was charging his batteries as a precaution. When the king wrote to Oxford for the heresies of

[1] *Letters and Papers*, v., 148.

Wycliffe, when Cromwell wrote to Flanders for the dialogues of Ockham, were not master and man getting up the case against the papacy? In January, Norfolk was talking big to Chapuys about Brennus and Arthur, Emperor of Britain, Gaul, Germany, and Dacia, and of the imperial claims of the English kings. To Charles the emperor, and Clement the pope, Henry was prepared in certain emergencies defiantly to answer that he, the King of England, was pope and emperor in one. CHAP. XII.

All the auguries pointed to a rupture. On January 5, Clement issued a brief forbidding Henry to remarry until the decision of his case, and prohibiting any university, parliament, or law court to decide upon a matter reserved for the decision of the holy see. Henry told the nuncio that he did not care three straws for excommunication and that if the pope designed to wrong him, he would proceed in arms to Rome and take vengeance.[1] In June a deputation was sent to Catharine to induce her to withdraw the appeal, and to consent to a change of *venue* and of judges. The deputation was numerous; it comprised dukes, bishops, canonists, and privy councillors, who entered the queen's chamber between eight and nine in the evening as she was retiring to rest. Speeches were delivered at her of the kind to which she was accustomed, and met the fate which a good conscience, a high courage, and a clear head knew how to deal out to empty sophistry. "The courage and fantasy" of the queen had prevailed again as Henry had expected. Yet if neither Catharine nor Clement would recede from their positions, Henry would be driven to open war.

The cost of a breach with the papacy was difficult to estimate. If it involved war with Charles, if it led to a suspension of the commercial relations between England and Flanders, the government might be involved in serious perplexity. The projected marriage with Anne was notoriously unpopular, and if to this cause of unpopularity was added the burden of war taxation and the losses consequent upon the closure of the Flemish marts, might not the people rise with arms in their hands? The defences of the Scottish border were weak; a Spanish envoy had appeared in Ireland, and the Earl of Desmond had thrown off his allegiance to Henry. Could the country stand the strain of

[1] *Letters and Papers*, v., 287.

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a foreign war over and above the charges with which it was actually confronted? The events of the year showed that public opinion was greatly stirred. The king had been resisted in the universities and the convocations. When the subsidy was demanded of the London clergy, a riotous assault was made upon the bishop's palace by men who argued not unsoundly that since they had never had any traffic with the legatine court, they were conscious of no offence, and deserved no fine. Mutinous words were spoken in the house of commons, when it was apprehended that the laity might be mulcted under the pretext of *præmunire*. "The king," it was said, "had burdened and oppressed his kingdom with more imposts and exactions than any three or four of his predecessors and should consider that his strength lay in the affections of his people."[1] To do Henry justice that politic consideration was never very far from his mind. He pacified the commons by the grant of the pardon which they desired, caused the decisions of the universities to be read in the house, and exhorted the members to make them known in the country. In November he commanded the publication of a pamphlet entitled *A Glass of Truth*, which, couched in the form of a dialogue between a lawyer and a divine, was intended to commend his cause to the nation. Nor was his orthodox zeal ever more conspicuous than on the eve of the final rupture with Rome. One whole day in June, from nine in the morning till seven at night, he spent in the examination of a heretic. In December, Lutherans were flying over-seas to escape his righteous and politic wrath; and many an old-fashioned game-preserving squire must have rejoiced in the Christmas holidays as he read the proclamations against beggars, heretics, and crossbows.

January 15, 1532, was fixed for the opening of the next session of parliament. "It is summoned principally," wrote Chapuys, on the 22nd,[2] "for the divorce and to ask money from the laity, but nothing has yet been done, and they will probably temporise till they have news from France or Rome." In the previous year the king had led the onslaught on the Church; the attack was now to be entrusted to the commons. The *præmunire* of 1531 was to be followed by a great parliamentary

[1] *Letters and Papers*, v., 171. [2] *Ibid.*, v., 737.

campaign against ecclesiastical legislation and jurisdiction. Both manœuvres formed part of a common plan, the object of which was to intimidate the pope, to enrich the crown, and to subject the Church. It is probable that both phases of the plot owed something to the inventive genius of Cromwell.

The king played his hand with consummate skill. The session began with animated debates, and "the infinite clamour of the temporality here in parliament against the misuse of spiritual jurisdiction" was duly notified to Rome to impress the pope. "The king," wrote Norfolk to Benet, "will stop all evil effects if the pope does not handle him unkindly." A bill to abolish annates, or the first-fruits of benefices paid on every vacancy to the pope, was before the house in February. "It was moved by the people," said the king to the nuncio, "who hate the pope marvellously." The idea was to depict a reluctant monarch carried forward on a wave of popular indignation, which might break England from her papal moorings if the pope declined to speak a timely word. The instructions given to Carne and Bonner, the agents at Rome, at the end of February were to threaten the pope with a general council, and with laws to be made in the parliament of England. "The lives of Christ and the pope are very opposite," observed Henry to Tunstall, "and therefore to follow the pope is to forsake Christ."[1] From such apostasy Henry and Cromwell would shield the faithful commons.

The attack began on March 18, with the presentation to the king of a "supplication against the ordinaries," four drafts of which exist with Cromwell's handwriting upon them. The petition was rigidly orthodox. It lamented the spread of heretical opinions and desired that it should be promptly checked. But on the other hand it complained that the peace of the kingdom was disturbed by the severity and uncharitable behaviour of the ordinaries in the examination of these heretical opinions. The commons then proceeded to recount the specific grievances which were endangering the peace of the realm. They complained that the clergy in convocation made laws and institutions without the consent of the king or the laity; that suitors could not have indifferent counsel in the courts of arches

[1] *Letters and Papers*, v., 820, 831, 832.

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and audience; that poor people were often maliciously summoned before the ecclesiastical courts and put to unnecessary expense, that excessive fees were charged in the courts, that probates were delayed, that minors were provided to benefices, and that the number of Church holidays was excessive. The supplication against the ordinaries did not come as a surprise. The question of ecclesiastical jurisdiction had been discussed in the council, not without heat, at least as early as the last week of February; and while Norfolk maintained that matrimonial cases belonged to the temporality, it was Wiltshire's opinion that no pope or prelate had any power to exercise any jurisdiction whatsoever.[1] Nevertheless the petition was received with an air of grave impartiality, and referred to convocation for a reply.

It would have argued considerable obtuseness if the chief legislative organ of the Church had shown itself impervious to the danger with which the existing ecclesiastical fabric was so clearly menaced. To prove even at the eleventh hour that the legislative forms of the Church could be useful, convocation determined to exercise them usefully, and canons were framed, which, if rigidly exercised, would have improved the tone and the discipline of the spirituality. In the midst of these beneficial labours the clergy were asked to consider a recommendation, the main feature of which was that independent ecclesiastical legislation should forthwith cease. An answer was drawn up in the name of the ordinaries, which traversed the points of the indictment, and defended the legislative power, as founded on the Scripture of God and the determination of the holy Church. Henry sent for Audeley, the speaker, and for a deputation of the commons, and invited the opinion of the lower house upon the apology. His own dissatisfaction was not concealed. "We think," he said, "their answer will smally please you, for it seemeth to us very slender. You be a great sort of wise men. I doubt not but you will look circumspectly on the matter and we will be indifferent between you." A second reply was prepared in the hopes of dispelling the royal displeasure, in which convocation, while maintaining with considerable force and urgency the claims of the Church to make rules concerning faith and good manners, professed itself willing to ask the

[1] *Letters and Papers*, v., 805.

king's consent for leave to publish and enforce them. The compromise was unacceptable. On May 10 convocation was informed that it must assent to three articles, the effect of which was to secure the complete submission of the Church to the state. In the first place the clergy must promise to enact no new constitutions, canons, or ordinances without royal licence. In the second place, the existing body of ecclesiastical law must be submitted to a committee of thirty-two, half lay, half clerical, but all chosen by the king, so that any ordinances found to be contrary to God's law or the laws of the realm should be abolished. Thirdly, the laws approved by the majority of the committee should receive the king's assent.

The next day, while the clergy were digesting these sweeping and unpleasant requisitions, the king sent for the speaker and twelve members of the commons, and told them that he had made a startling discovery. "Well-beloved subjects," he said, "we thought that the clergy of our realm had been our subjects wholly; but now we have well perceived that they be but half our subjects, yea and scarce our subjects. For all the prelates at their consecration make an oath to the pope clean contrary to the oath they make to us, so that they seem his subjects and not ours." With these words he handed over copies of the oaths and commanded them to be read in parliament, where the advisability of abrogating the canons of the Church seems to have been under consideration. Henry's discoveries in constitutional law were generally well timed: and his latest acquisition was calculated to quicken the reluctant progress of convocation down the path of surrender. The last agony was brief. On May 15, after some debate and negotiation, the articles were accepted without substantial change in a document appropriately known to history as the "submission of the clergy". It is not without significance that on the following day Henry accepted the resignation of the great seal by Sir Thomas More.

Lament has been made over the "last free convocation of the Church of England," and some have thought that with the submission of the clergy a real prospect was destroyed of purifying the Church from within. It is true that the Church possessed remedial machinery, which, if energetically applied, would have been adequate to the purpose. It is true that reforms were discussed in 1530 and formulated in the canons

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of 1532.[1] But what were the circumstances under which this remedial action was taken? The canons of 1532 were framed at a time of keen external criticism—criticism from the people, criticism from the parliament, criticism from the court; at a moment when convocation, fiercely assailed as to the discharge of its special legislative function, felt that remedial activity was its best and probably its only protection. And who were the men specially designed for the work of purification? Wolsey was dead; Warham was on the brink of the grave. To Tunstall, the friend, and to Lee, the enemy of Erasmus, the suppression of Lutheran opinions seemed for the moment to be the chief duty of churchmanship. The answers of the ordinaries had been prepared by Stephen Gardiner, the new Bishop of Winchester, an able canonist, a competent administrator, and a diplomatist of proved pliancy. But Gardiner was not of the temper of which reformers are made. The Bishop of London was Stokesley, a man of the same class, unyielding in orthodoxy, servile in politics, destitute of spiritual enthusiasm, indefatigable for the divorce. There were men of the reforming temper in the Church, but "the last free convocation" did not look upon them with favour. Hugh Latimer was a reformer, rough, outspoken, animated by a passion rare in those days for reality and truth. His preaching had undoubtedly been vehement, but it had been directed not against the mysteries but against the mummeries of the Church. He was summoned before convocation, required to subscribe to certain articles, excommunicated, placed in custody, and finally forced to an unreal acknowledgment of error.[1] "Freedom" was not in any case liberality. A Gloucestershire squire named Tracy, who died in 1530, left a will garnished with texts of Scripture, to the effect that he desired no masses for his soul nor pomp at his funeral, and that he would bequeath nothing to the priests, since merit consisted not in works but in faith. Convocation found the will to be heretical, and with an inhumanity which is a grim comment upon the age, commanded that the body should be exhumed as unfit for Christian burial. This order, given on May 13, 1532, was the last free act of the last free convocation of England.

The attack against ecclesiastical legislation was accompanied

[1] Latimer, *Sermons*, p. 294; *Remains*, p. 356; Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, vii., 456-58; Wilkins, iii., 745-46.

by an elaborate manœuvre against papal finance. A bill to abolish the annates was passed against the opposition of all the bishops and a considerable party in the lower house on March 19. In the preamble of the measure it was stated that these charges were originally levied against the infidel, but that they were now claimed for lucre against all right and conscience, that since the second year of Henry VII. £16,000 had gone out of the country for the expedition of bulls, and that as divers prelates of the nation were now in extreme old age, there was a near prospect of a considerable outflow of English money to Rome. It was therefore provided that all annates should henceforth cease, and that the consecration of archbishops and bishops should be valid without them. If the act had stopped here, it would have been tantamount to an open declaration of war against the papacy; but Henry was not yet prepared to break the bridges. He wanted to show the pope plainly that if he did not within a specified period annul the marriage, he would be deprived of his revenues from England. Accordingly the king was empowered to compound with the court of Rome to extinguish or moderate the annates, and to give or withhold his assent to the act by letters patent within a period not later than Easter, 1533, or the beginning of the next parliament. The act then was permissive. Whenever the statute is mentioned, wrote Henry to his agent in Rome, "you shall instil into their ears how incessant have been our efforts to resist the importunity of our people for passing the statute; and so secretly has the whole transaction been managed that no foreign prince should know of it or take occasion thereby to get a similar edict in his own country".[1]

As a weapon of diplomacy the statute was destined to play an important part. By this time it had become pretty clear to observers in England that, whatever the curia might decide, Henry had determined to take Anne. It was remarked that on January 1, 1532, the king for the first time omitted to send the customary new year presents to the queen and his daughter. "Anne," wrote Chapuys, on January 4, "is lodged where the queen used to be and accompanied by almost as many ladies as if she were queen."[2] On September 1, "the Lady" was created Marchioness of Pembroke, and in the following month

[1] *Letters and Papers*, v., 886. [2] *Ibid.*, v., 696.

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accompanied Henry to Calais, arrayed in the queen's jewels to meet the King of France. Some time towards the end of January the king must have known that Anne was with child.

If it was not important to save Anne's virtue, it was at least essential that her issue should be lawful. The marriage must be hastened on and the nullity of the union with Catharine declared. There was now no prospect that the pope would prove compliant, for on November 15, 1532, he had warned Henry upon pain of excommunication to reject Anne, and forbade him to divorce himself from Catharine on his own authority, or to marry Anne or any other woman. Marriage and decree of nullity must, therefore, be carried out in England and in defiance of papal censures. Somewhere about St. Paul's Day, January 25, 1533, Henry and Anne were secretly married, so secretly that nothing is known of the ceremony, that its date even cannot be fixed with precision, that about a fortnight elapsed before Cranmer knew it, that more than a month elapsed before Chapuys reported it to his master, and more than two months before it was notified to Catharine.[1] Rumour subsequently affirmed that the celebrating priest was Dr. George Browne, an Augustinian friar, but even this fact was not indisputably established. The reason for these extraordinary precautions was that Henry had determined to obtain a decree of nullity from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and that the Archbishop of Canterbury had not yet received his bulls from the pope. Till the bulls were obtained Henry must remain on good terms with Rome.

It was well for himself and no doubt convenient for Henry that Warham should have died in the preceding August, on the eve of a revolution which he could not have approved and would probably have been compelled to sanction. Of the ecclesiastics who might have aspired to the vacant see, Gardiner had occupied the most prominent position in the councils of the crown, but he had opposed Henry in the last session of parliament, and was passed over for a younger and less prominent man. The successor of Warham was Thomas Cranmer, archdeacon of Taunton, and already noted for his zeal in the king's matter. He had suggested the plan of appealing to the universities, had written a book upon the divorce, and had been

[1] Cranmer, *Works*, ii., 246; A. F. Pollard, *Henry VIII.*, p. 296.

employed in diplomatic missions in Italy, France, and Germany. His intelligence was keen, his learning considerable, his temper genuine and devout, and in the prayer-book he was destined to exhibit his exquisite command of all the harmonies of the English language. He was now forty-three years of age, in the full tide of vigour, and a convinced believer in the majesty of the crown and in the desirability of abolishing the papal power in England. He had been ordained as a widower, and long afterwards, being brought into relations with Protestant circles in Germany, had gone so far as to take a second wife, the niece of Osiander. The marriage of a priest was a defiance of ecclesiastical usage deemed more dangerous to the credit of the Church than the looser connexions to which popes and cardinals had not unfrequently given the sanction of their example; and a second marriage was a special offence. But Henry wanted a man with something of the heretic in his composition, and Cranmer had enough of the rebellious leaven to serve his turn. It was essential, however, that no shadow of doubt should rest upon the lawfulness of his appointment. CHAP. XII.

Cranmer must have his bulls. No technical objection must be lodged against his competence as primate of the English Church. He must also be empowered to decide the great matrimonial issue without fear of interruption or appeal; an object only to be obtained effectually if parliament declared all appeals to Rome to be illegal. The situation was delicate. At any moment the excommunication might be fulminated from Rome, and an excommunication would increase Henry's difficulties in parliament and the country. The bulls must be obtained for Cranmer, and the appeals bill must pass the houses; and then the pope might discharge his bolts. It is here that the annates act of the previous year justified its existence as a diplomatic expedient. The college was reminded, not without the accompaniment of liberal gratuities to the cardinals, that unless the bulls were promptly sent, and that too without payment of the usual first-fruits, the king would be unlikely to suspend the act. Pope and cardinals hesitated, but eventually decided to speculate in Henry's favour, and the bulls were granted with rare expedition. On March 30 Cranmer was consecrated and swore the customary oath of obedience to the holy see. He had, however, with signal dishonesty previously

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committed to writing a solemn protest that he considered the oath a form and not a reality, and that he remained free to provide for the reformation of religion, the government of the Church of England, and the prerogative of the crown. Henry had won the first round in the encounter. His archbishop had satisfied all the technicalities, and was prepared to lead the rebellion against Rome.

Meanwhile disquieting rumours were circulating through London. It was reported that Henry was secretly consulting Melancthon, that he would raise a regiment of horse and spoil the priests, that Cranmer was a Lutheran and that he was about to resign the temporalities of his see to the king that his fellow clergy might imitate the example. Henry, who had an important bill to steer through parliament, wished to create an atmosphere of confidence. He had long interviews with the nuncio, played with him, flattered him, dined with him, took him first into the lords, then into the commons by way of advertising his excellent relations with the holy see. As the commons feared nothing worse than a suspension of the intercourse with Flanders, it was put about by the king's ministers that Charles was favourable to the marriage with Anne, and to disarm clerical feeling they did not scruple to add that the pope also had withdrawn his objections. Nevertheless the bill for the restraint of appeals to Rome was contested with animation in the lower house, not indeed upon the ground that appeals were desirable, but from fear that the passage of the act would provoke reprisals, that the kingdom would be defamed as schismatical, and that the wool trade would be stopped. These fears were ridiculed by the advocates for the crown, who urged that if England would set the example of repudiating the pope, other princes would be eager to follow her lead; and so, while Henry was amusing the nuncio with hopes that he might be reconverted to the positions which he had defended in the book against Luther, the act in restraint of appeals passed into law.[1]

This statute, the first definitive infringement of the constitutional relations between the English Church and Rome, is a landmark in history. It declares the realm of England to be an empire governed by one supreme head and king; to whom

[1] The fear of Cromwell doubtless eased the passage of the bill (*Letters and Papers*, xii., 952).

"a body politic compact of all sorts and degrees of people and divided in terms and by names of spirituality and temporality" was bound to bear "next to God a natural and humble obedience". It proceeds to lay down the proposition that the English Church "is also at this hour sufficient and meet of itself, without the intermeddling of any exterior person or persons to declare and determine ordinances, laws, statutes, and provisions"; and after touching upon "the great enormities, dangers, long delays, and hurts" involved in appeals to Rome, concludes that all spiritual cases shall henceforth be "finally and definitively adjudged and determined within the king's jurisdiction and authority and not elsewhere". The competence and organisation of the ecclesiastical courts in England were left untouched save in one particular. Appeals relating to the king were to go before the upper house of convocation. CHAP. XII.

The ground was now prepared for action. The two houses of convocation, on the reports of two committees of theologians and canonists, added the weight of their authority to the propositions which had been affirmed in Paris, in Oxford, and in Cambridge. The theologians decided that a marriage with the childless wife of a deceased brother was against divine law. The canonists reported that the marriage of Catharine and Arthur had been consummated. Consistent and courageous, Fisher lifted up his voice in defence of Catharine's cause, and was committed to custody for his indiscretion. It was a second "submission," even less creditable than the first, and secured by means which it is difficult to defend. The case was pending in Rome, and a question naturally arose whether it was proper to debate it in England. The Bishop of London quieted the scruples of the questioners by producing a transcript of a brief issued three years before, in which the pope expressed a wish that every one should declare his opinion freely and with impunity in the case. The decision of convocation was in the hands of the king at the beginning of April. By its supreme legislative organ the English Church had irretrievably committed itself to his cause.

The convent of Dunstable is some thirty miles from London, and four miles from Ampthill where Queen Catharine was residing in the spring, 1533. The spot was quiet and yet accessible; suitable to the swift expedition of unpopular business; and it

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was hither that Catharine was cited to defend her cause before the new primate. She declined to appear; she would not acknowledge the court; she would accept no tribunal as competent, save the court of Rome to which she had appealed and before which her case was pending. Even had she chosen to plead, she would have been deprived of her greatest advocate, for Fisher was imprisoned four days before the opening of the court. On April 10, the first day of the process, she was pronounced contumacious, "few or none" being present at the sitting. The proceedings dragged on for thirteen days. Long documents were rehearsed to a judge who had already decided upon a verdict and feared nothing so much as the sudden appearance in that quiet chapel of the passionate queen with her unanswerable logic and tragical woes. At last on April 23 sentence was furtively given and communicated to the king. The long and squalid episode was closed; the marriage of Catharine and Henry was at last declared null; and on the very day of the verdict the lady who for twenty-four years had been known as Queen of England was told that she was queen no longer, and was henceforth forbidden to use the royal style.

On Whitsunday, June 1, Anne Boleyn was crowned in Westminster Abbey. A narrative which is hostile to the new queen says that no one in London or the suburbs, not even the women or the children, uncovered as the royal procession went by, and that the French ambassador and his suite were insulted by the people. It is probable that the wrath of the capital was not incompatible with the frank enjoyment of a brilliant spectacle; and that a censorious crowd was pleasantly distracted by the procession of the city barges with their glistening pennants and gay minstrelsy, by the sumptuous devices of the crafts, the gold uniforms of the guard, and the largesse which was so bountifully distributed to the people. The ceremony was performed by Cranmer. On the previous Wednesday, after a secret inquiry at Lambeth, he had issued an official declaration that a valid marriage had taken place between Henry and Anne. Three months afterwards, on Sunday, September 7, the queen was delivered of a daughter to the great regret of her parents and to "the great reproach of the astrologers, sorcerers, and sorceresses,"[1]

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vi., 1112.

who affirmed that it would be a male child. In the eyes of catholic Europe this little creature was a harlot's bastard. Two months after her birth bulls were placarded at Dunkirk excommunicating her parents. Ribald songs were sung against them at Antwerp, ribald verses placarded at Louvain. English preachers were prohibited from preaching for a year, lest they should revile the marriage of which she was the offspring. It was confidently expected in Flanders that Andrea Doria, the emperor's admiral, would conquer England, if only his master would give him leave. The baby so contumeliously received was christened Elizabeth, and was destined to humble the pride of Spain, and to be the central figure in the most glorious period of English annals. CHAP. XII.

In the debate on the appeals bill anxiety had been openly expressed that the kingdom would be declared schismatical, and would be made the objective of a catholic crusade. Henry was conscious of the risk and exerted every nerve to insure himself against it. The cardinal feature of his diplomacy was to keep well with Francis and to associate that monarch with every step in the great matrimonial manœuvre which threatened to lead to a breach with Charles. It was for this that the league with France was refreshed in September, 1532; that a meeting was arranged between the two monarchs in October of the same year; and that Henry, who was, to the scandal of Charles, accompanied by the newly-created Marchioness of Pembroke, crossed the seas, renewed his friendship with Francis, and persuaded him to send two French cardinals to Rome to press the matter of the divorce. The mission of the cardinals resulted in failure, and while Henry was secretly married to Anne, it was understood that Francis was treating for a marriage between his second son the Duke of Orleans and Catharine de' Medici the niece of the pope. Still Henry clung to his idea that the two courts should exercise a combined pressure upon the papacy. He sent Rochford to Paris in March, 1533, to communicate the news of his marriage, to request that it should be jointly announced in Rome by the French and English ambassadors, and to urge Francis to make the Medici alliance conditional upon the pope's acquiescence in Henry's demands. France, in other words, was to be the lever which was to extract a papal benediction on the mysterious marriage, and while French ambas-

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sadors were to urge the pope and cardinals to recognise the accomplished fact, a letter was dictated by Henry to be sent to Rome by the King of France expressing a belief that Henry's cause was agreeable to divine law and could no longer be delayed.[1] At the same time every effort was made to disarm the hostility of Charles.

Whatever the pope did, it was unlikely that Charles would draw the sword. He had too many enemies and Henry had too many friends. Norfolk pointed out to Chapuys that France was closely bound to England, that Henry had the friendship of a great part of Germany, that Italy was not so well affected to Charles as he might think, and that a breach of the Flemish intercourse would injure Flanders more than England. This calculation proved to be correct. The plan of employing force was considered in the imperial council and rejected in view of the circumstances of Europe. In July Charles learnt that the Algerines had captured eight of his galleons and that Barcelona was in revolt. His was not a quixotic nature, and with grave difficulties menacing him from every quarter of the empire, prudence was the first duty. Besides, as Chapuys had the honesty to inform him, Catharine herself was averse from any step which might lead to open war.

All through these weary transactions Clement had behaved with signal timidity. It was now three years since Catharine had lodged her appeal at the court of Rome, and no decision had been taken. At last the news of the king's marriage spurred the pope into activity. On July 11, 1533, sentence was declared at Rome, and bulls of excommunication were prepared to enforce it, which, however, were not to be published until the end of September in order that Henry might have a last chance of recalling Catharine. The blow was immediately returned. Henry withdrew his ambassadors from Rome, and tried to break off the impending interview between Francis and the pope, asserting that he had attempted no innovation of which the French king was not the substantial author; that on his advice he had invoked the aid of parliament, and that what he had done could never be undone. These representations notwithstanding, the meeting of Clement and Francis took place

[1] *State Papers*, vii., 427, 435; *Letters and Papers*, vi., 230.

at Marseilles. But Henry was even with his enemy. On November 7 Bonner succeeded after some resistance in getting access to the papal chamber, and notified to the pope in person that the King of England appealed from his sentence to a general council. CHAP. XII.

Francis was moved to exasperation. He valued the English alliance as a support against the empire, and was glad to see the dissolution of the Anglo-Spanish connexion. That Henry should be divorced from Catharine was well; that he should be married to Anne was well. Francis was willing to assist in a consummation so mortifying to his rival, and so admirably calculated to cause a breach between the empire and England. But it was no part of the French design that England should break with the papacy, that she should become a schismatical power, or that Henry should assist Charles in promoting a general council. Francis had always understood that Henry wished to cover himself with papal authority; but he was now undeceived. "As fast as I study to win the pope," he said to Gardiner, "ye study to lose him. Ye require a general council and that the emperor desireth, and I go about to bring the pope from the emperor and you to drive him to him. And can my brother call a council alone? Ye have clearly marred all." And with that he wrung his hands and wished that he had never meddled in the matter.[1] Nevertheless he would not lightly relinquish the idea that a pacification was still possible, and in the winter Du Bellay was sent to London to induce Henry to withdraw his appeal and to resume his negotiations with the curia. But Henry had taken his course, and angels from heaven could not have moved him from it. His terms were that the first marriage should be annulled, and the second recognised, before Easter. Otherwise he would throw off his obedience to the Roman see. Du Bellay's journey to Italy with these conditions is one of the most forlorn errands in history.

The time for compromise was past. The king remarked early in December that he repented of nothing more than of the book which he had written formerly against Luther. Quite lately, at the request of Francis and in the hope that something would be arranged in his favour at the conference at Marseilles,

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vi., 1427.

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he had caused the preachers to forbear preaching; but now he would set them on again and they would reveal the abuses of popes and churchmen as he had never done before. Norfolk, a clever man but a despicable trimmer, freely blasphemed the pope at the expense of his convictions in order to retain influence at court.[1] In December, the king's council was busy arranging all the details of the revolution. "It sits almost daily," writes Chapuys, "and several learned canonists are summoned to the board."[2] The councillors were forbidden to speak of the pope save under the title of Bishop of Rome. Instructions were sent out to the Lord Mayor of London that the pope was only Bishop of Rome and that he had no jurisdiction in England. The pulpits were carefully tuned; orders went out to the bishops, the heads of religious houses, and the provincials and rulers of the four orders of friars that no one was to be suffered to preach who would not set forth the doctrine that general councils were superior to all bishops, that the pope had no jurisdiction in England, and that his previous authority was usurped by the sufferance of princes. The king's appeal to the council and the act for restraint of appeals to Rome were to be affixed to every church door in the kingdom. It was agreed to despatch ambassadors to conclude a league with Poland and Hungary, with the German princes, and the Hanse towns; and while the king made a point of parading his good intelligence with the Germans, orders were issued to improve fortifications, to repair ships, and to procure munitions. As the temper of the capital was doubted, guns were placed on the Tower to command the city.

Parliament met on January 15, 1534, and since the business to be transacted was of the highest importance, considerable pains were taken to prepare for its smooth passage. In the lower house there were at least forty vacancies to be filled up, caused by death, promotion, and possibly resignation; and care was taken that the new members should be well-affected to the policy of the crown. Scarcely a third of the spiritual lords were present in the upper house, and if the king did not actually, as Chapuys reports, countermand the attendance of all who were likely to oppose him, he certainly consented to their abstention.

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vi., 1501, 1510. [2] *Ibid.*, vi., 1501.

We know practically nothing of the thoughts and feelings of the assembly which in a brief winter session carried out the greatest revolution in English history. We can but dimly conjecture its emotions and perplexities at the effacement of so many familiar landmarks and the prospect of so many unfamiliar perils. For the most part it is safe to assume that however unpopular the royal policy might be, loyalty to the crown was still solid and unquestioning. But some members secretly intimated to Chapuys that, if Charles should invade the kingdom, he could count on their support. CHAP. XII.

The final severance between the Church of England and the see of Rome was effected by three measures. The annates act, passed two years previously, had reserved certain payments for bulls, had been liable to suspension by an act of the royal prerogative, and, being intended as a threat rather than a settlement, had made no satisfactory provision for the election and consecration of bishops. These deficiencies were now remedied by a bill which passed both houses, on March 16, under the title of an "act for the restraint of annates". It was here laid down that no bulls or briefs should in future be procured from Rome and that no annates or first-fruits of any kind should be paid there. It followed that the elections of archbishops and bishops were henceforward to be conducted without reference to an alien power; and statutory authority was given to the custom by which the deans and chapters elected under royal licence a person designated in a letter missive from the king. If the chapter failed to elect within twelve days after the delivery of the king's licence and letters missive, they fell under a *præmunire* and the nomination lapsed to the king. There was to be no shadow of divided allegiance. The bishop-elect must take an oath of fealty to the king before consecration.

Another act forbade the payments of Peter's pence and all other pensions or fees to Rome. It spoke of the "intolerable exactions of great sums of money," usurped and practised in derogation of the king's "imperial crown and authority royal, contrary to right and conscience". It affirmed that it was not the intent of the legislature "to decline or vary from the congregation of Christ's Church in any things concerning the very articles of the catholic faith of Christendom," but only to make politic regulations for the realm. But it cut at the roots of the

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papal power in England. The pope was henceforth to receive no money from the clergy, secular or regular. The Archbishop of Canterbury was to grant licences in all cases where licences had previously been sued from Rome. No clerk, regular or secular, was henceforth to take an oath to the Bishop of Rome. No abbey or monastery was to be visited from Rome or by authority of Rome. Abbeys and monasteries which were previously exempt were to retain their privilege, but were to be visited henceforward by royal commission. The measure, which was first of all described as a "bill for the abrogation of the usurped authority of the Roman Pontiff," and ultimately as "a bill for the exoneration of exactions paid to the see of Rome," was finally passed on March 30.

On the same day the royal assent was given to "an act for the submission of the clergy to the King's Majesty," which embodied the concessions made to the crown by convocation in 1532 and reaffirmed the act in restraint of appeals which had been passed for the special purpose of defeating the claims of Catharine. Convocation was only to be assembled by royal writ, and was to promulgate no new canons save with royal assent. A commission named by the king was to reform the canon law; nor should any canon be enforced which should run counter to the king's prerogative or to the customs, laws, and statutes of the realm. While no appeals were to go to Rome under penalty of *præmunire*, there was to be an appeal from the archbishop's court to the king in chancery. Religious houses which were exempt from episcopal control should appeal direct to the same royal tribunal.

The last act of this remarkable session vested the succession to the crown in the heirs of Henry by Anne Boleyn. In its scope and elaboration the act of succession bears witness to the anxieties, scruples, and doubts aroused by the great matrimonial case. It is at once a treatise on the canon law, a constitutional enactment, and a political manifesto. It opens with an assertion of the indisputable evils of a disputed succession. It then declares the king's marriage with Catharine to be "from henceforth called and reputed only Dowager to Prince Arthur," to be invalid and his marriage with Anne valid. In impressive language it invokes the authority of the clergy of this realm, of "the most part of all the famous universities of

Christendom," and lastly of the royal wisdom itself in support of the proposition that "no man hath power to dispense with God's law". That the divine law may be clearly known, a list of the prohibited degrees is copied out, and ordinaries are instructed to separate all persons married within them. Has not his majesty compassion for all Christian bachelors implicated in godless marriages? The king's issue by Anne is a lawful issue. It is high treason to slander the marriage or to question the succession "by writing, print, deed, or act".

For the better security of the succession an oath was to be taken by the king's subjects to observe the whole contents of the statute upon pain of misprision of treason. It was in the strained state of national feeling, a severe, a cruel, perhaps even an audacious test. That parliament should define the course of the succession was a happy innovation upon constitutional precedent, and Henry might have expected his subjects to subscribe to a brief act giving statutory confirmation to the marriage with Anne, and entailing the crown upon her issue. But it was characteristic of Henry's peculiar form of self-righteousness to exact from clergy, parliament, and people an unreserved adhesion to every proposition involved in his case. The cup which he drank, all should drink; the meat which he ate, all should eat; his theology, his politics, his marriage, his divorce should be adopted, sanctioned, supported by the whole body of the nation, spirituality and temporality, seculars and regulars, nobility and commonalty. On March 30, the day of the prorogation, the oath was taken by the members of the two houses, and a commission was issued to Cranmer, Audeley, Norfolk, and Suffolk, to receive the oaths of the king's subjects in accordance with the act.

A week before the labours of the session were ended sentence was given at Rome in favour of Catharine. Crowds paraded the streets with cries of "Empire and Spain"; the night was gay with fireworks; and salvoes of cannon were discharged to honour the triumph of justice. "Other victories," wrote Dr. Ortiz to Charles, "have been gained over men, this over enemies let loose from hell."[1] But in what sense can the verdict of such a tribunal, however necessary, be regarded as a

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vii., 370.

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victory? It could not alter the moral or legal facts. It could add no lustre to Catharine's character. It could not better her lot; it gave but tardy recognition to the thing which she knew to be true. Upon the king's policy it acted not as a check but as an irritant. The news of the verdict must have reached London either while the policy of exacting the oath of supremacy was still under consideration or while it was yet open to the royal commission to administer it with leniency. To Henry it suggested this thought: "Who is to be the master, the pope or I? Let the oath sever the grain from the chaff."

We now enter a period which is happily unique in the annals of England, a period of terror. It lasts from 1534 to 1540 and is conterminous with the ascendency of Thomas Cromwell in the councils of the king. It was not an unparliamentary period, for the reformation parliament which was summoned in 1529 was not dissolved till 1536, and other parliaments were sitting in 1539 and 1540. But it was a despotic period, gloomy in comparison with the brilliant morning of the reign, and marked by an ever-thickening atmosphere of suspicion, violence, and plunder. "Master Cromwell," said Sir Thomas More, "you are now entered into the service of a most noble, wise, and liberal prince; if you will follow my poor advice you shall, in your counsel-giving to his grace, ever tell him what he ought to do, but never what he is able to do. . . . For if a lion knew his own strength, hard were it for any man to rule him." The lion, who had shaken off the pope, began to comprehend the vast proportions of his strength. He had pushed his way through a jungle of desperate and thorny perplexity, and found himself at last, breathless and a little surprised, saluting the clear, untried horizon. At first he was nervous, dreaded every rustle of the breeze. Could it really be so easy? Was there not peril lurking in every quarter? Then he roared and things submissively quivered, stamped and things quietly died, until it was lodged in the very marrow of his being that he was indeed the lion of God and a law unto himself.

In these ten grim unlovely years the reformation was unalterably riveted upon the English people. The abrogation of papal authority, decreed at Westminster, was made an essential point in the loyalists' creed and was enforced by all the sanctions with which a despotic government served by an elaborate sys-

tem of espionage could enforce it. New treasons were created to defeat the papist. The faith was settled by royal authority; the Bible was translated into English; the monasteries were dissolved, and their lands distributed among the gentry. By a system of secularisation, which occupied more attention than any purely religious or spiritual movement, a great vested interest was created in the reformation; and that so securely, that lively as were the counter-currents of catholicism, they were never able to wash away the masonry of these ten years. All successful revolutions are the work of an energetic minority, which succeeds not so much in proportion to the spiritual and intellectual quality as to the width and variety of its appeal. The valuable results of the French revolution were perpetuated by a great measure of confiscation which transferred the property of the Church to the French peasantry. The secularisation of the abbey lands secured the English reformation by harnessing to the king's cause the strongest, most enterprising, and most influential section of English society.

Yet hard and grasping as were the politics of the sixteenth century, they were not entirely devoid of ideal elements. If the English reformation was not wholly religious, neither is it wholly to be explained on the hypothesis of lust and land-hunger masquerading in the guise of religion. Cynical men do not exploit religion unless religion is already a force; nor do they exploit it successfully unless there is some coincidence, accidental or essential, between the statecraft of the cynic and the enthusiasm of the prophet. In the secularisations of the sixteenth century, which were carried out not in England only but in Germany and in the Scandinavian kingdoms, and everywhere with much repulsive greed and violence, such a coincidence existed. It was believed that the cancer which was gnawing the vitals of the Church was wealth and worldliness. This was not a new or unsubstantial opinion. It had been repeated so often as to become a dogma. The most eminent doctors of the catholic Church in the ages of the most ardent and unquestioned faith had denounced in unsparing language the greed of Rome, the abuses of the papal system, the temptations and evils of secular pomp. The mass of testimony was overwhelming, the stream of invective perpetual, from the days of St. Bernard to the days of Luther. The result was a widespread belief that

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if the Church could only be impoverished, she would be purified; and this opinion, which had been disseminated in England by the writings of Wycliffe, was coloured and strengthened by a closer acquaintance with the text of the Bible, and by a comparison between the simplicity of the primitive Church, and the sumptuous and imposing polity which had been fashioned by the statecraft of succeeding ages.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CATHOLIC MARTYRS.

THE summer had not passed without many indications that the repudiation of Catharine was unpopular in the country. "Every day," wrote Chapuys, on May 18, "I have been applied to by Englishmen of rank, wit, and learning, who give me to understand that the last King Richard was never so much hated as this king";[1] and though Chapuys' intelligence was doubtless exaggerated there was sufficient cause for anxiety in the reports of sermons and loose talk which floated in to Cromwell from many parts of the country. Pardoners would dilate upon the "articles of St. Thomas and the liberties of the Church"; preachers would point significantly to painted windows portraying a king kneeling naked before the shrine and submitting to the scourge wielded by a monk; while in the confessional the papal party possessed an agency for the fortifying of infirm consciences, at once powerful and ill-defined. It was resolved to make an example which should silence those who thought that no sound policy could be rooted in particular acts of crying injustice. The victim selected was one Elizabeth Barton, who had attracted considerable attention by her saintliness, her trances, and her prophecies.

The Holy Maid of Kent, as this poor woman was called by her admirers, had been a domestic servant in the employ of one Thomas Cobb, a steward of the archiepiscopal estates in the parish of Aldington, some twelve miles from Canterbury. About Easter, 1525, when some eighteen years of age, she was seized with a serious illness, in the course of which she is said to have fallen into trances. In these trances, or ecstasies, she appears to have uttered prophecies, one of which, the impending death of

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vi., 508.

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a child belonging to her master, was shortly realised. The value of the prophecies was quickly perceived by Richard Masters, the rector of Aldington; and the shrine of Our Lady at Court-at-Street, which was the scene of her ecstasies and the object of her inspired recommendations, soon became attractive to pilgrims and lucrative to the neighbourhood. The news of these miraculous doings reached the ears of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and a commission was despatched by Warham to investigate the case. One of the commissioners was Richard Masters, another was Dr. Bocking, monk and cellarer of Christchurch, Canterbury, who was shortly to become the confessor, the spiritual adviser, and the *impresario* of the prophetess. Their report was favourable, and Elizabeth Barton, prompted to take the veil by a heavenly warning, was received into the Convent of St. Sepulchre, Canterbury, a position under the eye of the cellarer and more convenient for oracular development and influence.

Here her reputation steadily grew. Every week or fortnight she had a trance and was transported into direct communication with the unseen world. She spoke with angels and devils, displayed a letter from heaven written in golden characters by St. Mary Magdalene, and by the miraculous conveyance of an angel intercepted the sacrament which was being ministered to King Henry at Calais. One would consult the oracle on the spiritual fate of a departed friend; another, like the Marchioness of Exeter, would pray for her intercession to avert domestic calamity. Her power over the emotions was great and genuine, and it was often used for noble purposes, to urge people to repent of their transgressions and to obey the moral law. "She has raised a fire in some hearts," wrote a Carthusian friar, "that you would think like unto the operation of the Holy Spirit in the primitive Church." Her revelations and miracles were taken down and circulated, obtaining credence among all sorts and conditions of men and women, from Fisher, the most learned prelate in England, to the humblest Kentish churl who followed the plough.[1]

Unfortunately the nun was drawn into politics. The oracle was visited by a number of persons anxious for an authoritative deliverance from heaven upon the king's marriage and upon the

[1] A. D. Cheyney, "The Holy Maid of Kent," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, N.S., xviii., pp. 107-29.

heresies and schisms which were dividing the realm. To such inquirers the nun, not without promptings from the cellarer, declared that the king would not survive his second marriage more than a month, and that once united to Anne he would no longer be king in the eyes of God. Though plainly directed by Bocking, and like many hysterical women given to subtle forms of deception, Elizabeth Barton became the instrument of a genuine moral protest against the divorce. Her head was turned. She aspired to be a great political influence, entered into communication with the papal ambassadors, had an interview with the king, wrote to the pope, and professed to have received a revelation that Henry would soon be driven from his throne by his own subjects. In July, 1533, the government determined that the case of "the hypocrite nun" must be dealt with.[1] CHAP. XIII.

It would appear that in the course of October, after Cromwell had laid hands upon all her confederates, Elizabeth Barton was examined in the Star-chamber and forced to an avowal that she had used deceit. Assuming that the confession was properly obtained no one would blame the government for giving it the widest possible advertisement. The nun's revelations were notoriously calculated to stir up disaffection against the government, and every government has a right to protect itself against disaffection. On November 23, before a large concourse the nun and her accomplices, six in number, were placed upon a high scaffold before St. Paul's cathedral and made the mark for a vituperative sermon. At the end of the discourse the nun handed her confession to the preacher who read it out aloud. Henry and Cromwell, however, not content to expose, determined to exploit the imposture. The nun, who was now safe in the Tower, had for the last seven years been one of the most curious and interesting objects on the high-road between Dover and London. All kinds of people had had dealings with her at one time and another, while of late she had exercised a magnetic influence over the queen's adherents. The destruction of the poor woman with her six accomplices would not only cow opposition, but would cause tremors of ill-defined alarm to spread through the large and various circle of persons who through

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vi., 887.

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superstition, curiosity or political prepossession had been brought into relations with her. Henry had determined to require of his parliament that it should specifically declare his first marriage invalid, a proposition which, if a plebiscite could have been applied to its determination, would have met an overwhelming and indignant negative. The passage of an unpopular measure would be facilitated by creating an atmosphere of apprehension among those who were likely to oppose it. With this object in view the chancellor spoke at a public audience in November of the great personages mixed up in the affair, many still alive whom the world should know hereafter, while the king pressed for a judicial declaration that it was heresy to believe the political revelations of the nun, and high treason to fail to report them. The judges made difficulties, and the project of a trial was abandoned; but a bill of attainder was brought into the lords on February 21, 1534, and passed on March 12. No evidence was taken, no defence was made, parliament accepted the confession and the results of an inquiry conducted before the privy council. On April 20, the five victims—for Richard Masters received a pardon—were executed at Tyburn. In the long and tragic struggle of the English reformation these five—Elizabeth Barton the nun, Bocking and Dering, two Benedictine monks, Resby the friar, and Gold the secular priest—were the proto-martyrs of the catholic cause.

Among those whose names were at first included in the bill of attainder against the nun and her accomplices were Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More. The connexion between the late chancellor and the prophetess had been of the very slightest description and was frankly recounted in a letter written by More to Cromwell in March, 1534. In 1525 or 1526 Henry had consulted More as to "a roll with certain words spoken in trances," which had been communicated to him by Warham. More replied that there was nothing in it that he could at all regard or esteem, for except that some was in rhyme and that full rude, there was "nothing that a right simple woman might not speak of her own wit". Then some seven years passed during which he heard nothing of the maid except what was common knowledge. It happened, however, that about Christmas, 1532, Friar Resby lodged one night at More's house and after supper began to speak of the nun's political revelations. More

stopped him, saying that he declined to hear any revelation of the king's matters, and after his departure never set eyes upon him again, until he saw him standing on the scaffold at Paul's Cross. About Shrovetide Father Rich made an attempt equally vain to enlist his interest in these political miracles. More was determined not to be drawn into the trap. "Since she hath been with the king's grace herself and told him, methought it a thing needless to tell the matter to me or any man else." Rich changed the conversation and never recurred to the topic. CHAP. XIII.

Meanwhile More's natural vein of curiosity was excited. He thought that though some of the tales were certainly untrue, an element of truth might be contained in them, worthy to be examined by the ordinaries. Lies were often told of the saints of heaven, and yet miracles were done by them for all that. One day happening to be at Sion, some of the fathers told him that the nun had been with them, and mentioning several things which they misliked in her, expressed a wish that More could have seen her. An interview was arranged and held in the little chapel of the monastery; but nothing was said about the king or any other great person. On going away More gave the nun a double ducat and asked her to pray for him and his. Hearing, however, that "many right worshipful folks both men and women" had much communication with her, and suspecting that this intercourse was not always of the wisest description, he sent her a letter, dissuading her from political talk, and instancing the fate of the Duke of Buckingham. Then came the arrest and examination of the nun and the open confession at Paul's Cross. More, who had been favourably impressed at the personal interview, was now convinced of the imposture and sent to tell the proctor of the Charterhouse that she was undoubtedly proved "a false deceiving hypocrite". Such was the story of his relations to Elizabeth Barton. "It pierced his heart," he wrote to Cromwell on March 5, that the king should think that in his communications with the nun or the friars or in his letter to the nun he had "any mind that could not stand with his duty as a loving subject".

It might have been thought that such an explanation would be amply sufficient to dispel all danger. More, however, knew the king, and was well aware that his place in the bill of attainder was principally due to his known disapproval of the divorce,

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and affection to the primacy of the pope. He therefore gave Cromwell a plain account of his attitude as regards these two questions. He did not deny that when appointed chancellor and asked by the king to consider his great matter, he had come to a conclusion adverse to the king's contention. But Henry had specially declared that he did not wish More to do or say anything but as his conscience served him; and when informed of More's opinion, took it in good part, and employed him in business which did not put any strain upon his conscience. More, in fact, "settled his mind in quiet to serve the king in other things". He would never read the books composed against the divorce, nor did he write anything or cause anything to be written against his master. Since the king was now married again, and "this noble woman really anointed queen," he would neither murmur at it nor dispute upon it, but "faithfully pray to God for his grace and hers both long to live and well, and their noble issue, so in such wise as may be to the pleasure of God, honour and surety to themselves, rest, peace, wealth, and profit unto this noble realm".[1] More, in other words, was willing to accept the accomplished fact of Henry's marriage with Anne, and to behave as a loyal subject, though he could not withdraw his conscientious opinion as to the rights of the divorce. His attitude was precisely similar upon the second question, the primacy of the pope. He believed that it was of divine institution, or at least instituted by the body of Christendom for urgent causes, and he could not see how all Christendom being one body, any member could without the common assent of the body depart from the common head. As the king had appealed from the pope to a general council, he prayed God to send the king comfortable speed. He trusted that the king did not intend to deny the authority of general councils, for it might happen that at the next general council the pope would be deposed. These were his opinions, but he was resolved that they should not involve him in the imputation of disloyalty. Indeed he had suppressed passages of his writings intended to promote a belief in the primacy of the pope.

The king had now reached a point at which he could brook

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vii., 289.

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no difference of opinion upon the two questions which he considered vital to his credit and to the unity of the state. If it was known that the most eminent man in the kingdom questioned his marriage and the legitimacy of its issue, other less illustrious persons would be led to indulge in similar questions. England would be divided into two halves, one owning allegiance to Henry, Anne, and Elizabeth, the other to the pope, Catharine, and Mary. There might be civil war; there might be foreign invasion; the scheme of strong Erastian Church government, which it was the mission of the present parliament to construct, might be shattered at the outset. The casuistry of an egoist is surprising, and in More's conscientious objections Henry discovered symptoms of ingratitude to himself. He was fully aware of More's value as a companion, a scholar, and a man of affairs. There was a time when he would drop in to share his chancellor's dinner in More's Chelsea house; when he would "have him up into his leads there to consider with him the diversities, courses, motions, and operations of the stars and planets"; when the two men would discourse geometry or divinity in the king's chamber, or stroll together after dinner in the pleasant Chelsea garden. More had helped Henry in the final stages of the book against Luther, and the king was sufficiently cultured to appreciate a delicate wit and a fine intellect when he came across them. But every gift and every quality which would make More valuable to Henry, his reputation for knowledge and virtue, his great position in the world of European culture, his skill as an orthodox controversialist, would make him priceless to the opposition; and so Henry argued himself into the position that More must submit or die.

On March 6 the bill for the punishment of the holy maid was read for the third time in the house of lords, and in the catalogue of the victims designed for the executioner's axe were the names of More and Fisher. If the bill had then passed, the two most prominent living Englishmen would have been condemned to a traitor's death unheard. Fortunately there was still some feeling of justice, honour, and independence among the peers, and a message was sent from the upper house to the king to ask whether Sir Thomas More and others named in the bill might be heard in their defence in the Star-chamber. To this modest proposal Henry declined to assent. If More were

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allowed to make an oration in the Star-chamber, it was easy to predict what kind of deliverance that would be and what kind of effect it would produce. In lieu of a public defence, Henry commanded a private examination before a committee consisting of Cranmer, Audeley, Norfolk, and Cromwell. The committee was instructed to begin with cajolery, and if cajolery failed, to resort to threats. With singular effrontery they had been commanded to charge More with having provoked the king to put forth a book for the assertion of the seven sacraments and in maintenance of the pope's authority. "My Lords," answered More, "these threats be arguments for children and not for me"; and then he proceeded to show how the real facts of the case were exactly the reverse of what the king had stated; how he had not been consulted until the book was finished; how he found the pope's authority "already highly advanced and with strong arguments mightily defended," and had urged Henry either to omit his plea that the papacy was of divine institution "or else to touch it more slenderly".[1] The result of the interview was reported to the king, and quickened his zeal for the attainder. Informed that if More were not put out of the bill, it would certainly fail to pass through the upper house, he replied that he would come down to the house in person and see that the measure did pass.

At last upon Audeley's urgent intercession, he was persuaded to recede from a position which might have brought upon him a parliamentary defeat. More's name was taken out of the bill: but he was conscious that the lion would not relinquish his prey. "In faith, Meg," he said to his daughter on receiving the news, "*quod differtur non aufertur*;" and with equal prescience and equanimity he conversed with those who tried to bend him to concessions. "By God's body, Master More," said Norfolk, "*indignatio principis mors est.*" "Is that all, my lord? Then in good faith the difference between your grace and me is that I shall die to-day and you to-morrow."

Fisher was not so fortunate. He had petitioned to be relieved of attendance in parliament on the ground of ill-health, and during the session which was to decide upon his fate he lay at Rochester, a martyr to a hacking cough, and with legs too

[1] More's *English Works*, p. 1426.

swollen and aching to allow him to walk or ride. The old man avowed that he had believed in the nun, partly upon common report, partly because of "the good religion and holiness of her ghostly father and other priests who testified to her," and partly because he had learned from Warham that she had "many great visions". He admitted that he had seen her on three occasions and that she told him once that if the king "went forth with his purpose, he would not be king seven months after"; but this revelation—and here her words were confirmed by the prioress and others—had been imparted to the king by her own lips. How then could Fisher be accused of treason for concealing from his sovereign information which to the best of his belief his sovereign already possessed? He had never given the nun advice, and he had taken her words to refer not to the temporal power but to the power of God. In a letter to the lords of parliament Fisher prayed that he might not be tried unheard. CHAP. XIII.

Cromwell, who had advised the bishop to abandon all thought of defence and submit himself to the king's mercy, was exasperated when instead of abject humiliation, he received a serried defence, concluding with a proud note of warning, that if pushed to the wall Fisher would speak as his conscience led him rather than lose his soul. He wrote a reply which must have left little hope in Fisher's breast, complaining with some justification that the bishop had accepted the revelations of the nun without sufficient inquiry. "I appeal to your conscience," he wrote, "whether you would have believed her if she had shown you as many revelations in confirmation of the king's present marriage, and would have let her trial stand over so many years when you dwelt but twenty miles from her in the same county." Fisher's name was retained in the bill, and parliament voted him guilty of misprision of treason. As yet, however, his life was spared, and he was allowed to compound by a fine of £300.

On April 13, 1534, More was summoned before the commissioners at Lambeth and required to take the oath to the succession. The form of the oath had not been determined by statute, and was extremely rigorous, involving as it did an acceptance of all the numerous propositions contained in the act of succession. Having read over the oath and the statute, More said that he did not wish to find fault either with the act or any one who made it or with the oath or any one who swore, or to con-

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demn any other man's conscience, but while he was willing to swear to the succession, he could not take the oath without jeopardy to his soul. The commissioners vainly tried to move him. They said that he was the first to refuse the oath, and showed him the roll subscribed by the members of the two houses. His refusal would cause the king to feel great suspicion and indignation against him. He was sent out into the garden to reflect, while the London clergy poured in to take the oath. When he returned he was told how many had "sworn gladly without sticking," during his absence. He blamed no one but answered as before. Cranmer, hoping to find some loophole of escape, put forward an argument which for a moment gave him stay. If More did not condemn the consciences of those who swore, then he considered it doubtful whether he might not swear it; on the other hand it was certain that he should obey the king, and a certain duty should be preferred to an uncertain one. The argument was plausible, but would not stand examination. This was one of the cases, replied More, in which he was bound not to obey his prince, for, whatever other people thought, in his own conscience the truth seemed to be on the other side. The Abbot of Westminster said that his conscience should be changed seeing that the whole parliament was against him. More answered that he was not bound to conform to the council of one realm against the general council of Christendom. At this Cromwell exclaimed with an oath that he had rather that his only son had lost his head than that More should have refused the oath, and said that Henry would now think that the matter of the nun was "contrived by his drift". In the end, More repeated his willingness to be sworn to the succession, provided that an oath were framed agreeable to his conscience. Fisher's reply was practically identical. He would undertake to respect the succession and to refrain from any further activity on Catharine's behalf; but his conscience as to the Levitical tables was fixed.[1]

This compromise should have been accepted. The danger with which the state was threatened was that the succession should be contested, and More and Fisher were willing to swear that they would not contest it. They would accept the accom-

[1] More's *English Works*, p. 1428; *Letters and Papers*, vii., 575.

plished fact, much as they deplored it, and little as they approved the logic or the ethics by which it was supported and in which it was involved. They had declined to swear to the whole statute, because, not content with declaring the validity of the marriage with Anne, it repudiated the primacy of the pope and asserted the invalidity of Henry's union with Catharine. Cranmer petitioned that they should be excused the preamble and swear to the succession alone. But to the king's rigorous and exacting intelligence the three propositions were locked together in so close a nexus of history and logic that it was vain to dissever them. He replied that the expedient suggested by Cranmer might be taken as a confirmation of the Bishop of Rome's authority and as a reprobation of the king's second marriage; and More and Fisher were sent to the Tower. CHAP. XIII.

The prime object of the government during the remainder of the year was to compel the country to repudiate the pope. The oath was administered to laity and clergy; and the convocations of Canterbury and York, the two universities and the capitular bodies made the declarations which were required of them. Substantial gentlemen were sworn to the privy council in every shire with orders to apprehend all who should speak or preach in favour of the pope's authority. The boroughs were placed under surveillance, and an injunction was issued by Cranmer that preachers should avoid touching upon points of catholic doctrine or upon the burning political question. It was held desirable that the public conscience should so be tranquillised, and that occasions should not arise for fear that the state was given over to the heretics. For the space of a year no preacher was to speak either for or against purgatory, the honouring of saints, the marriage of priests, justification by faith, pilgrimages, or miracles. "We expect you," wrote the king to Cranmer, "to have special regard to the election of preachers . . . so that our people may be fed with wholesome food neither savouring the corruption of the Bishop of Rome nor led into doubt by novelties."[1]

When all allowance has been made for the terror, it still remains a surprising fact that the abrogation of the papal authority was accepted with so little demur in the country.

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vii., 750.

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The pope was on the popular side in the divorce question, and derived an adventitious advantage from this circumstance. Yet, with few exceptions, the whole body of the English clergy, regular and secular, abjured his authority. Spoliation was in the air, and the monks no doubt hoped to save their lands by timely submission; but timidity and calculation do not explain everything. There would have been no cause for timidity if a large body of moral support had been forthcoming from the laity for the defence of the pope. But from the fragments of seditious talk which have come down to us, it is clear that the unpopular part of the king's policy was not the repudiation of the Bishop of Rome, but the treatment of Catharine and Mary.

There was one memorable exception which stands out brightly from the monotonous record of timid compliance. Owing to the monastic appropriation of tithes many English livings were too poor to prove attractive to educated men. In the whole province of York Archbishop Lee reported that he had only thirteen clergymen capable of delivering a sermon. A university man would not settle down in a living worth eight or nine pounds, and the wealthy incumbents were generally absentees. In these circumstances most of the preaching both in town and country fell into the hands of the friars, who had it in their power to exert a considerable influence upon public opinion. That influence the government was determined to bring under its own control. A royal commission was issued on April 13, 1534, to Dr. George Browne, prior of the Augustinian Hermits, and Dr. Hilsey, provincial of the Black Friars, to visit all the friars' houses of the kingdom, to make inquiry concerning their lives, morals, and fealty to the king, to instruct them how to conduct themselves with safety, and to reduce them to uniformity, calling in, if necessary, the aid of the secular arm. Every friar was to be separately examined and bound by an oath of allegiance to the king and Queen Anne. They were to acknowledge the king as supreme head of the Church, to confess that the Bishop of Rome had no more authority than other bishops, to abstain from calling the Bishop of Rome pope, either publicly or privately, and from praying for him as such. They were to be bound by oath to preach obedience to Henry VIII. and acceptance of the succession, and to

commend the king and queen to the prayers of their congregations. Every sermon was to be examined and burned if not orthodox and worthy of a Christian preacher. Finally, each house was compelled to show its gold, silver, and movable goods, and to deliver an inventory of them to the commissioners. The terms were framed to provoke resistance and to provide an opportunity for suppressing and despoiling the orders.— CHAP. XIII.

Most of the friaries submitted. "I have not found," wrote Hilsey from Exeter on June 21, "any religious persons who have utterly refused the oath of obedience."[1] To this rule, however, there were three exceptions, the Observants of Richmond and Greenwich, the Carthusians of London, and the Friars of Sion. On June 17 two carts full of friars drove through London to the Tower. The victims were drawn from the friaries of Richmond and Greenwich, which two days earlier had confronted Bishop Rowland Lee and Thomas Bedyll with their firm intention to live and die in the observance of St. Francis' religion. An excuse was thus afforded to obliterate the whole order of Observants. Their seven houses were cleared, and those friars who were not sent to the Tower were dispersed among other monasteries, where, according to Chapuys, they were bound in chains and treated worse than common prisoners.[2] The buildings were given over to the Augustinians. It was Henry's first experiment in the suppression of a religious order.

At the London Charterhouse and at Sion were found men equally willing "to sacrifice themselves for the great idol of Rome". The Carthusians, obedient to the letter and spirit of their rule, had taken no overt part in opposing the divorce; but their reputation for ardour and piety was great, and through the confessional they would be able to exert an influence upon penitents. Their prior, John Houghton, sprung from a good Essex stock, of graceful manners and refined appearance, excited the love and admiration of a superstitious and somewhat morbid community by his singular charm and beauty of character. He told the commissioners, Lee and Bedyll, that it did not concern him or his subjects to discuss the king's business, but that for his part he could not understand how it was possible that a

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vii., 869. [2] *Ibid.*, vii., 1095.

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marriage ratified by the Church and so long unquestioned should now be undone. In this view his house concurred; and for holding it, Houghton and Middlemore, the proctor of the convent, were sent to the Tower. The imprisonment of two men of such conspicuous virtue as the prior and proctor of the Charterhouse aroused some uneasiness in the circles of official and compliant clericalism. It was no part of the government design to hold up before the country examples of tragic heroism, nor was it agreeable to the prelates who had accepted the supremacy that good men should be destroyed for denying it. Stokesley and Rowland Lee went to the Tower, tried their persuasions upon the prisoners and were successful. At the end of a month of short rations and foul lodging, Houghton and Middlemore were permitted to rejoin their community, having promised, not without misgivings, to submit themselves to the king. But the oath was not easily accepted by men of scrupulous conscience; and thirty-five members of the house were only reduced to a conditional submission upon the appearance of the sheriff of London and his men-at-arms on June 6.[1]

Parliament met on November 3 for the purpose of completing the legal separation from Rome. Three years before convocation had recognised the supremacy of the king over the Church subject to the condition "as far as the law of Christ allows". The first measure of parliament was to pass a short act embodying the substance of this concession without the limiting clause. The act of supremacy declares that the king's majesty "justly and rightfully is and ought to be supreme head of the Church of England, and to enjoy all the honours, dignities, pre-eminences, jurisdictions, privileges, authorities, immunities, profits, and commodities to the said dignity of Supreme Head of the Church belonging and appertaining". By this act, which remained in force for twenty years, the king assumed all the juridical and political powers which had previously been exercised in this country by the pope. He would not have claimed for himself the right to baptise, to confirm, or to celebrate the mass. He would not have regarded himself as a fountain of doctrine, though he was determined that his bishops

[1] "Sic demum in verba regis juravimus sub conditione tamen quatenus licitum esset," Chauncy, *Historia aliquot martyrum*, p. 91; *cf.* Doreau, *Henri VIII. et les martyrs*, p. 114.

should accept no doctrine of which he could not approve. He did not actually preach, though he corrected preachers in the middle of their sermons, if their language displeased him. But some of his theologians held that the prince could depose and appoint bishops, and had the right to occupy the preacher's place;[1] and Henry was clear that it was within the province of the supreme head of the Church to reform the canon law, to control ecclesiastical legislation, and to exercise a disciplinary and corrective power over the Church.

As early as March, 1533, Henry had let out in a conversation to Chapuys that he was determined and bound by his coronation oath to unite to the crown the goods which churchmen held of it.[2] When Henry made a voyage of exploration across that strange ocean, his conscience, he generally returned with an argosy. The intentions of the king were handled by rumour, declaring that spoliation was inevitable, but uncertain of the form which spoliation would take. In January, 1534, Chapuys reported to his master that the king intended to usurp part of the Church's goods and to distribute the remainder to the nobles, adding that benefices would be given to laymen. The intelligence was confirmed in September by no less a person than Cromwell himself, who said that he understood that at the next parliament the king would distribute the greater part of the ecclesiastical revenues among the gentlemen of the kingdom to gain their support. A scheme of secularisation was prepared in view of the autumn session, which if carried into effect would have altered the whole face of society. According to this plan the archbishops and bishops were to be placed upon fixed annual salaries, and the residue of their temporalities secured to the king "for the defence of the realm and the maintenance of his royal estate". The king was to have the first-fruits of every bishopric and benefice for a year, the moiety of the dividend of every cathedral and collegiate church, and a third of the revenues of every archdeaconry. The lands of all monasteries containing less than thirteen persons were to be entirely confiscated "for the maintenance of the royal estate". From the property of the larger monasteries a sum was to be assigned proportioned to the number of monks and novices, and

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vii., 1384. [2] *Ibid.*, vii., 235.

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sufficient to keep up repairs and hospitality. The residue of the estate was to go to the king.[1] We do not know whether this plan was devised by Cromwell or whether it received Henry's serious consideration; but if considered, it must have at once become apparent that a measure so comprehensive would pass with difficulty through parliament. It was open to three objections. It despoiled the bishops of the larger part of their revenues, and it was upon the bishops that Henry chiefly relied to enforce his ecclesiastical policy. It offered no inducements to the gentry. It proposed to despoil the monasteries before they had even been submitted to the formality of a visitation. The measure which passed through parliament in the autumn embodied only one and that the least objectionable feature of the recommendations. It gave to the crown the first-fruits and tenths which had previously been taken from the pope.[1]

Before the houses were prorogued a group of measures became law, the design of which was to strike still further terror into the country. The oath which had been administered by the commissioners in the summer was now covered by a statutory sanction, which had the effect of giving a retrospective legality to the imprisonment of More and Fisher. A new statute of treasons was passed by which verbal offences against the king and queen were elevated into the category of high treason, and acts of attainder were passed against Fisher and More. The house of commons had made many base surrenders, but the treason act, which imperilled the most elementary liberties of the subject, did not pass without hot questionings. "There was never more sticking at the passing of any act than at the passing of the same," says a contemporary. It was a new principle that words should be high treason, and the house of commons insisted that if the principle was to be accepted, the words should at least be spoken "maliciously". The adverb was forced into the bill, and was as nugatory in its effects as an adverb in a bill can be. One other assault upon the purses and liberties of the nation was designed. A bill was drafted for the creation of a court of six "conservators of the common weal" with powers to summon before them any persons who should have violated any act of parliament since the beginning

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vii., 1355, 1380, 1383.

of the reign of Henry VII. The expedient, which bore too close a resemblance to the methods of Empson and Dudley, may never have reached the threshold of parliament; but for all that Cromwell swore that he would make his master the richest prince in Christendom, and the end of the session found him admiring the despotic authority of the Turk.[1]

Henry said to Palamedes Gontier that there were three things which gave him special satisfaction in the revolution which he had just accomplished: the augmentation of his revenue, the union of his kingdom, and the peace of conscience he enjoyed in having thrown off the subjection to Rome. He exhorted Francis to follow an example so replete with benefits of every kind. Into the sanctuary of the royal conscience it would be profane to enter; but it was true that the revenue had already been augmented by the fifteenths and tenths now to be collected upon a stricter valuation and that further additions were in contemplation. If acts of parliament can make a kingdom united, Henry was right in speaking of the union of his kingdom. He had ousted the pope and usurped his prerogatives and emoluments in the kingdom.

Nevertheless there was good reason for apprehension. Chapuys, who was aware that men so important as Lord Darcy, the Earl of Northumberland, and Lord Sandys viewed Henry's policy with disgust and indignation, calculated that with a little money from the emperor 100,000 men might be mustered for an insurrection. In January, 1535, a rumour flew round that the Black Monks had gathered £160,000 to make a rising against the king. Reports came in of seditious words used up and down the country. "The king is a knave," said one, "and liveth in adultery and is an heretic." "Masters," said a friar in the course of a sermon, "take heed; we have nowadays many laws. I trow we shall have a new God shortly." Dr. Benger, of Wingham, came into his archdeacon's parlour and seeing a fire said: "This fire, masters, is good for to roast and to seethe and to warm, but not to burn no men, Sir Thomas, I trow". Thomas Lawney said: "Whom would you have burned?" He said: "All these new learned men". In this uneasy and divided state of the public mind the government determined to grant no truce to

[1] *Letters and Papers*, vii., 1611, 1554.

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doubt or disaffection. On April 28 a group of five men were brought up for trial under the new acts of supremacy and succession. Their names were John Houghton, prior of the London Charterhouse; Augustine Webster, prior of the Charterhouse of Axholme, in Lincolnshire; Robert Lawrence, prior of the Charterhouse of Beauvale, in Nottinghamshire; Dr. Richard Reynolds, of the Bridgettine monastery of Sion; and John Hale, vicar of Isleworth. A sixth, a young priest named Robert Feron, was included in the indictment, but pardoned on turning king's evidence. Hale was accused of violent and treasonable language against the king. He is reported to have said that the king treated the spirituality "as if they were his utter enemies, enemies to Christ and guilty of his blood"; that he violated almost all the matrons at the court; that he robbed virtuous and learned men of their livings and thrust them into perpetual prison. Further he had, it was said, speculated on the chances of a successful insurrection: how Ireland would not shrink in the quarrel; how Wales would join in, and how three parts of England were against the king. Houghton, Webster, Lawrence, and Reynolds were indicted for refusing to accept the supremacy when the oath was tendered to them in the Tower on April 26, 1535. "The monks," reported Chapuys, "maintained their cause most virtuously. No one being able to conquer them in argument, they were at last told that the statute being passed they could not dispute it, and that if they would not alter their language they were remanded to the next day to hear the sentence."

On April 29 a verdict of guilty was returned by a jury which is said to have been coerced by Cromwell to violate its conscience, and the four monks were sentenced to the traitor's death. When the chancellor asked Reynolds why he persisted in an opinion which had been proscribed by so many lords and bishops in parliament, he proudly answered that he had all the rest of Christendom in his favour; "I dare say," he continued, "even all this kingdom, although the smaller part holds with you, for I am sure the larger part is at heart of our opinion, although outwardly, partly from fear, partly from hope, they profess to be of yours". On this he was commanded by the secretary on pain of the heaviest penalties of the law to declare who held with him. He replied with simple sublimity: "All

good men in the kingdom". On May 4 the execution took place at Tyburn. "While they were still alive the hangman cut out their hearts and bowels and burnt them. They were beheaded and quartered and the parts placed in public places on long spears. And it is believed that one saw the other's execution fully carried out before he died—a pitiful and strange spectacle, for it is long since persons have been known to die with greater constancy. No change was noticed in their colour or tone of speech, and while the execution was going on they preached and exhorted the bystanders with the greatest boldness to do well and obey the king in everything that was not against the honour of God or the Church." The Dukes of Richmond and Norfolk, the Earl of Wiltshire, and other lords and courtiers were present at the execution, and people said that the king himself would have been glad to witness the butchery.[1]

The barbarous execution of monks eminent in their virtue, still robed in the habits of their order, and destroyed for professing a faith which was shared by the vast majority of their fellow-Christians, sent a shudder of surprise and horror through Europe. But a still greater shock was prepared for the civilised world. Fisher and More had been condemned to perpetual imprisonment in the previous year. The one had fought in the forefront of the divorce, devoting his learning and ardour to the cause of the queen and the liberties of the Church; the other was the most brilliant ornament of Christian letters. With a sense of wrong quickened by the passion of an advocate and the learning of a divine, Fisher regarded the recent revolution as a detestable crime against God and would have welcomed a foreign invasion to reverse it. But he was a man of sixty-six, his frame broken by labour and austerity, and he was unlikely, even if restored to freedom, to embarrass the government. More had surrendered the seals of office that he might pursue a course of devout study and contemplation, had expressly disavowed any disloyal intentions, and had received an assurance through Cromwell that the king would not further trouble his conscience. In the anger caused by the resistance of the Carthusians and by the refusal of the French king to repudiate the pope, Henry determined that these two men should swear to the act of supremacy or die. If the oath were taken, the impres-

[1] *Letters and Papers*, viii., 661, 666.

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sion caused by the resistance of the monks would be effaced, and frail consciences would run more easily to compliance.

Accordingly on April 30 More was called before Cromwell and asked his opinion of the statutes recently passed, and especially of the act giving to the king the title of Supreme Head of the Church under Christ. "He answered that he had trusted that the king would never have demanded such a question to be put to him; that he had already declared his mind to his highness; that he would not dispute the king's title or the pope's; that he was the king's true subject, and would daily pray for him and all his. "I am the king's faithful subject and daily bedesman. I say no harm, I think no harm, but I wish everybody good. And if this be not enough to keep a man alive, in good faith I long not to live." The king was not satisfied. On May 7 Cromwell, Bedyll, and other members of the council visited Fisher in his cell. The secretary read the act of supremacy; the bishop declined to accept it, and met the sophistries of Bedyll with a heated rejoinder. On June 3 Cromwell, Cranmer, Audeley, Suffolk, and Wiltshire were equally unsuccessful with Sir Thomas More. The prisoner would neither expressly assert nor expressly deny the supremacy, but when Audeley and Cromwell represented that the king could force him to an answer, he replied that it would be hard to make him choose between the loss of his soul and the destruction of his body. The secretary said that More, as chancellor, had compelled heretics to answer whether they believed the pope to be head of the Church or not. Why should not the king compel him? More replied that there was a difference between "what was taken for an undoubted thing throughout Christendom and a thing that was merely agreed in this realm and the contrary taken for truth elsewhere". In conclusion, he was asked whether he thought the statute lawfully made or not. He replied that the act was like a two-edged sword, for "if he said that it were good, he would imperil his soul; and if he said contrary to the statute, it were death to the body". He declined therefore to swear at all. As the committee departed, Cromwell said that he liked him worse than the last time, "for then he pitied him, but now he thought he meant not well".

Meanwhile an event had occurred exactly calculated to expunge any lingering feelings of mansuetude in the king's

heart. On May 20 Paul III., ignorant it would appear of the elementary fact that the Bishop of Rochester was in the Tower, and desiring to do pleasure to Henry, created seven cardinals of whom Fisher was one. If Fisher's biographer is to be trusted, the king sent Cromwell to the Tower to learn if the hat would be accepted. "Sir," answered Fisher, "I know myself unworthy of any such dignity, that I think nothing less than such matters; but if he so send it me, that I will work with it by all the means I can to benefit the Church of Christ; and in that respect I will receive it on my knees." Henry boiled over with wrath. "What, is he yet so lusty? Well, let the pope send him a hat when he will; but I will provide that whensoever it cometh, he shall wear it on his shoulders, for head he shall have none to set it on." Again and again he growled out in his passion that he would give him another headgear, and then send the head to Rome for the cardinal's hat. A deputation was at once sent to intimate to the two prisoners that unless they swore to the act by St. John's day they would die the traitor's death. Preachers were ordered to thunder against them in the London churches; schoolmasters were charged to revile the pope to their pupils; clergymen to delete the pope's name from all service books. On June 16 Chapuys wrote that a command had gone forth that the Gospel was to be read in English in all the churches.

Fisher was brought to his trial in Westminster on July 17 together with three Charterhouse monks, Humphrey Middlemore, William Exmew, and Sebastian Newdigate. He was charged with having openly declared at the Tower on May 7, 1535, that "the King our sovereign Lord is not supreme Head on Earth of the Church of England," and a similar indictment was lodged against the Carthusians. The jury of freeholders dwelling within the liberties of the Tower brought in a verdict of guilty, and the prisoners were condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn. The grisly sentence was carried out in its full barbarity upon the Carthusians, but Fisher's doom was alleviated, perhaps, as his biographer remarks, from the fear that if he were laid upon a hurdle and drawn to Tyburn, he would expire before reaching the gallows. On the morning of June 22 the lieutenant told him to prepare for death. "He commanded his man to take away the shirt of

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hair (which accustomely he wore on his back) and to convey it privily out of the house, and instead thereof to lay him forth a clean white shirt and all the best apparel he had as cleanly bright as may be." The servant asked the why and the wherefore of this command. "Dost thou not mark," said the bishop, "that this is our wedding day, and that it behoveth us therefore to use more cleanliness for solemnity of the marriage." At the foot of the bell-tower he was taken on a chair by two of the lieutenant's men and carried to the Tower gate to be delivered to the sheriffs of London for execution. Every movement in the progress was watched by a heart-stirred crowd; every prayer and gesture was engraved on pious memories. As the tall emaciated figure mounted the stairs to the scaffold on Tower Hill, the sun shone very bright on his face, "whereupon he said to himself these words, *Accedite ad eum et illuminamini, et facies vestræ non confundentur*". He was very earnestly entreated, even at this eleventh hour, to comply with the king's wish and to earn his pardon. But having endured so much, he would not imperil his soul at the gates of paradise. "He spoke to the people boldly," says the Bishop of Faenza, "telling them to be loving and obedient to the king, who was good by nature, but had been deceived in this matter; that he was led to death for wishing to preserve the honour of God and the Holy See, at which he did not grieve, but was content, for it was God's will." The crowd marvelled that from a body "so weak and sickly and old" there could proceed a voice so plain and audible.

The axe fell; the head was impaled and exhibited on London bridge; while the corpse was left naked and uncovered to the gaze of the spectators till the evening. About eight o'clock an order came from the king's council to the halberdiers who watched the body, that they should cause it to be buried. "Whereupon," says the biographer, "two of the watchers took it upon a halberd between them and so carried it to a churchyard called All Hallows Barking where upon the north side of the churchyard hard by the wall they digged a grave with their halberds and thereon without any reverence tumbled the body of this holy prelate and blessed martyr." It was noted by the pious that "for seven years after his burial there grew neither leaf nor grass upon his grave," and that the head which had

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seemed so worn and pallid on the living man experienced a miraculous rejuvenescence in its place of splendid ignominy. The morrow of the execution was the eve of St. John, and in honour of the double occasion a travesty of the Apocalypse was acted in London in which the king was represented as cutting off the heads of the clergy. His majesty, who had come in from the country to be present at the performance, was hugely delighted; and discovering himself to the people joined in the merriment of the hour. With a pleasant thrust at the Bishop of Rome, he recommended Queen Anne to call for the piece on the eve of St. Peter.

On July 1, Sir Thomas More was brought before a special commission in Westminster Hall, and charged with traitorously attempting to deprive the king of his title of supreme head of the Church of England. When the indictment had been read, the chancellor and the Duke of Norfolk cried to him, and said: "You, Master More, have gravely erred against the king; nevertheless we hope by his clemency that if you repent and correct your obstinate opinion, in which you have so rashly persevered, you will receive pardon". "My lords," replied More, "I thank you very heartily for your good will. I pray God preserve me in my just opinion even to death." A chair was ordered to be placed for him, and he proceeded to traverse the articles of the indictment. He had been charged with maliciously opposing the king's second marriage. He answered that he had spoken according to his conscience, and that for this error, if error it could be called, his goods had been confiscated, and he had been condemned to perpetual imprisonment, fifteen months of which he had already endured. Then turning to the principal charge, that of refusing to the king his title of supreme head of the Church, he replied that the statute could not condemn him to death for silence, but only for words. The king's proctor replied that silence was a proof of malice. "Surely," replied More, "if what the common law says is true, that silence gives consent, my silence should rather be taken as approval than as contempt of your statute. You say that all good subjects are obliged to reply; but I say that a faithful subject is more bound to his conscience and his soul than to anything else in the world, provided his conscience like mine does not raise scandal or sedition." He entirely denied the allegation that he had written

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eight letters to the Bishop of Rochester advising him to disobey the statute; or that there was any preconcerted arrangement. "Be assured," he concluded, "I never did or said anything maliciously against the statute, but it may be that this has been maliciously reported to the king." Rich testified to words maliciously spoken in the Tower; More repeated the substance of his conversation and appealed to the court to believe his word rather than that of a man like Rich, "a great doer and of no commendable fame".

The defence was ended. After a quarter of an hour the jury brought in a verdict of guilty, and as the lord chancellor was proceeding to give sentence, More claimed the right of speech. The strain and suspense were over, the need for caution was passed, and Westminster Hall rang with a challenge which was heard all through Christendom: "Since I am condemned, and God knows how, I wish to speak freely of your statute for the discharge of my conscience. For the seven years that I have studied the matter I have not read of any approved doctrine of the Church that a temporal lord could or ought to be head of the spirituality." The act of parliament was repugnant to the laws of God and the Holy Church, a violation of Magna Carta and the coronation oath; nor could the realm of England refuse obedience to the see of Rome any more than a child could refuse obedience to its natural father. The chancellor interrupted him. "What, More, you wish to be considered wiser and of better conscience than all the bishops and nobles of the realm?" To this More replied: "My lord, for one bishop of your opinion I have a hundred saints of mine; and for one parliament of yours, and God knows of what kind, I have all the general councils for a thousand years; and for one kingdom I have France and all the kingdoms of Christendom". Norfolk told him that now his malice was clear. More replied that he had spoken in discharge of his conscience and satisfaction of his soul. "I say, further," he continued, "that your statute is ill-made, because you have sworn never to do anything against the Church which through all Christendom is one and undivided, and you have no authority without the common consent of all Christendom to make a law or act of parliament against the union of Christendom." He left the hall with a prayer that God might protect the king and give him good counsel,

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While he lay in prison awaiting death another attempt was made to wring a retractation from him, but his mind was composed, and he now wished only to be released from the troubles of life. Early on Tuesday, June 6, Sir Thomas Pope came to him with a message from the king and the council that he should suffer death before nine o'clock on the same morning. He was informed further that it was the king's pleasure that he should not use many words at his execution. More replied that he was glad of the warning, for "he had purposed to have spoken somewhat, but of no matter wherewith his grace or any other should have cause to be offended". Loyalty to the king was as deeply ingrained in him as loyalty to his conscience. His end was of a piece with his life; sweetened by innocent mirth and unaffected piety.

In estimating the conduct of the government at this crisis it should not be forgotten that it was a belief almost universal in that age, that force was a necessary and effective prophylactic against dangerous opinions. In the very year of these conspicuous tragedies the English government caused thirteen miserable Dutch anabaptists to be burned at the stake. These obscure men died for their opinions. No one lamented them; their names have not even been recorded, and Sir Thomas More would have seen in their terrible punishment a righteous exercise of human power. The government of Henry VIII. applied to the catholic martyrs exactly those measures of persuasion which the Church for many generations had applied to men and women suspected of deviating from the narrow highway of the faith. There were the same repeated efforts to obtain an acknowledgment of authority, the same ultimate sentence of death; and then the rope and the axe in place of the fiery torments of the stake. Henry wished to secure the unity of political opinion in England; the catholic martyrs died to preserve the unity of religious opinion in Christendom. The basis of authority was disputed; upon the logic of persecution there was no controversy. The martyrs appealed to the voice of God as manifested in the decisions of the pontiff and the decrees of the Church. On the other side there were not wanting those who declared that the Divine Spirit was as operative in an English parliament as in a Roman consistory. The claims of the native state were pitted against those of the

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universal Church in a conflict unsweetened by conciliation or temperance. Having explored with all the power of an energetic and hostile intelligence the fabric of papal pretensions, and having come to a firm conclusion that allegiance to the pope was a doctrine unsupported by Scripture and subversive of political order in the realm, Henry determined to stamp out that allegiance and all its professors. The more novel and audacious the creed, the more haste and violence were deemed necessary for its propagation. The treatises of Fisher were condemned to the flames, and the magistrates were commanded at quarter sessions to declare to the people the treasons committed by the late Bishop of Rochester and Sir Thomas More.

To talk of justice is idle. All the considerations which would have urged a just man to be tender to the old opinion, that it was inured in custom, that it was held by virtuous and loyal men, that it had been found compatible in former ages with national prosperity, that until yesterday it had passed unquestioned by the ruling powers of the state, impelled Henry to the opposite extreme of rigour. A better man would have trod the path of revolution encompassed in a swarm of misgivings. It was the secret of Henry's peculiar strength that misgivings were always in the end swallowed up in blind and implacable self-righteousness. He had taken his course, and he intended that the nation should follow him without a mutter of discontent. It was an adventure which ten years ago would have seemed to him the climax of amazing impiety. Now it appeared in the light of a policy essential to the welfare of the realm and to be supported by the whole force of an absolute government.

The execution of Fisher and More put an end to the last hope of reconciliation with the papacy. The deed was a challenge to the world which, if the papacy had been powerful to effect its purpose, would have called down condign punishment upon its author. When Cardinal de Tournon related the circumstances of Fisher's execution to the consistory, the whole audience were moved to tears. To Paul III. the crime appeared so heinous as to merit the extreme punishment which it was in the power of the papacy to inflict, and in the first glow of indignation a bull was prepared which deposed Henry from his throne, absolved all his subjects from their allegiance, and placed the kingdom of England under an interdict. But

the political condition of Europe was unfavourable to concerted action, and strong pressure was put upon the pope, especially by the court of France, to reserve the execution of the bull to a more convenient occasion. The old animosities between Charles and Francis were still unimpaired, and though Francis declared that he did not approve of Henry's acts and that he would not defend him against the Church, he remarked that if the emperor sought to ruin the king in order to obtain the hegemony in Europe he would find himself mistaken. CHAP. XIII.

There were, however, two contingencies which caused apprehension in Henry's council. The first of these was a possible union between Charles and Francis, the second the summoning of a general council. "To obtain Milan," observed Cromwell to Chapuys, "the French would renounce the friendship of all princes, father and mother, and even God himself;" and it was clear that if Charles should once offer Milan to Francis, there would be a diplomatic revolution in Europe which would free either power for action against England. The faintest hint of a secret understanding between Charles and Francis—and there were such hints in February and again in December, 1535—was sufficient to make Cromwell cringe to the imperial ambassador. The danger, however, was remote, and policy, despite many a strain, kept Francis at peace with Henry during the critical years of the ecclesiastical revolution. The second danger was the summoning of the general council to whose verdict Henry had appealed. If the question of the divorce were brought before a council of the Church, composed as councils generally were, and summoned within the sphere of papal and imperial influence, a verdict would certainly be given against the marriage with Anne. Nothing could be more calculated to embarrass Henry in the course upon which he was fatally embarked. Despite all his wilfulness he still cared for the good word of Europe, and in his multifarious appeals to the tribunal of European opinion he made great parade of the support which he had received from the universities. An adverse opinion proceeding from a general council of the Church would strengthen his enemies at home and abroad, and he was determined to exhaust all the resources of diplomacy to prevent such an opinion from being expressed.

Ever since the divorce had strained the relations between

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England and the empire, Henry had been on the look-out for alliances among the German princes. He had praised their zeal for reform in May, 1531, but warned them against a restless spirit of religious and social innovation; had suggested to Francis a joint mission to the Duke of Saxony; had urged upon the French court the expediency of supporting the German princes with money. In 1532, Sir William Paget was in Germany, instructed to collect Lutheran opinions on the divorce and to sound the disposition of the protestant princes; in 1533, Vaughan and Mount were sent on a similar mission of exploration. As yet, however, no definite instructions had been issued for the conclusion of a political league, nor were the reports of the English agents in Germany particularly reassuring. The German princes were not yet prepared to plunge into war against the emperor, upon friendly assurances from a power which was unlikely to offer them serious assistance, and on July 23, 1532, they concluded a religious peace with the emperor at Nuremberg. Henry, however, was well aware that the peace was a makeshift, that the Italians and Spaniards in the imperial train were hated in Germany, and that the catholic and protestant parties were still ranged as if for battle. As soon as his own quarrel with Charles became irremediable he determined to press for a closer union with the princes and cities of the protestant league. Accordingly in January, 1534, Heath and Mount were sent with a mission to the courts of Bavaria, Saxony, Hesse, Cologne, Trèves, and Mainz to explain the justice of the king's cause, and to exhort the princes to maintain it at the general council. Paget was despatched upon a similar errand to Lüneburg and Mecklenburg, to Poland and to Prussia; and since it was understood that the princes of North Germany were chiefly solicitous about the cause of the reformation, he was charged to assure them that "his highness will admit their causes to his most favourable audience and do his utmost for the reformation of abuses and establishing the good intents and purposes of the same princes for the maintenance of God's word, the faith of Christ, and wealth of Christendom, as pertains to the office of a Christian prince".

In the search for counterbalancing alliances, Henry was led into a curious and unprofitable adventure. Lübeck, the leading city of the Hanseatic league, had recently experienced one of

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those religious and social convulsions which at one time or another affected almost every large commercial town in Germany during this epoch of unrest. The authority of the old religion was overthrown and a close catholic oligarchy gave place to a democracy as turbulent in its demeanour as it was pronounced in its protestantism. In the social ferment which succeeded the downfall of the old worship, a man named Jürgen Wullenweber rapidly rose to the front, and on March 8, 1533, was chosen burgomaster. Aided by a lawyer and a blacksmith, Wullenweber plunged into a series of ambitious political adventures. He aimed at restoring the political predominance of his native city in the Baltic, at controlling the policies of Denmark and Norway, at closing the Sound against the Netherlands, and at the formation of a strong league of protestant municipal democracies in North Germany. There was little affinity between the English king and the German demagogue, between the defender of the faith and the man to whom local rumour attributed the subversive tenets of the anabaptists; but an accident brought Henry into connexion with Lübeck and led to a temporary coalition.

In August, 1533, seven armed vessels belonging to Lübeck seized two Spanish ships, ran into Rye harbour with their prey, and helped themselves to provisions at the expense of the burghers of Rye. The king ordered Meyer, one of the German captains, to be detained, and while permitting the vessels to return home sent to demand reparation for an outrage which might involve him in difficulties with the empire. Brought up to London, Meyer found means to insinuate himself into the king's favour, was housed, feasted, knighted, and made himself the instrument of an intrigue which might have led to serious consequences. In April, 1533, the throne of Denmark had become vacant, and the triumvirate of Lübeck was determined that at least it should not be filled by an enemy. Francis I. had coquetted with the idea of obtaining the Danish crown; Meyer now proposed that it should be assumed by the King of England. If Henry did not wish to govern the country himself, he was invited to subsidise a German prince, who, on securing the crown, should become tributary to England. The overtures were listened to; and in February, 1534, the secretary of Lübeck was in London negotiating very secretly with the

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king and Cromwell. At last on August 2, 1534, a treaty was struck between England and Lübeck. The republic pledged itself to support Henry's union with Anne Boleyn; to maintain his views as to the Bishop of Rome's authority; to supply him with twelve armed ships, and to aid him in obtaining possession of Denmark, should he decide to accept the monarchy. Meanwhile Henry advanced a loan of 50,000 gulden for the prosecution of the Danish campaign.

The terms of the treaty were never carried into execution. On July 4, 1534, Christian of Holstein, with whom the Lübeckers were already engaged in conflict, was chosen King of Denmark under the title of Christian III. The new king was a protestant connected by blood and marriage with the leading princely houses of Northern Germany, and was desirous of amity with Henry. Dr. Barnes wrote urgently from Hamburg, on the 12th, to press Henry to make an alliance with a prince so strong and evangelical. But Henry was already pledged to Lübeck, and the future of Denmark was not so clear as Barnes had expected. The claims of the new king were vigorously contested, and it was not until June, 1535, that he was able to secure a decisive military advantage. In desperation Wullenwebel offered the Danish crown now to Albert of Mecklenburg now to Frederick the Count Palatine. But nothing prospered with him. The tide of reaction mounted in Lübeck with the failing fortunes of his foreign policy; the city was split into factions; and with the rout of its forces on land and sea, the dim prospect of an English hegemony over the three Scandinavian kingdoms faded instantly away. By July, 1535, Henry had come to the conclusion that the adventure must be wound up, and sent to treat for a general peace. In February, 1536, he made a treaty with Christian. The Danish king, who sang Lutheran hymns as lustily as any doctor in Wittenberg, promised Henry his support in the general council and undertook to secure the suffrages of Sweden and Holstein. Lübeck recognised the Dane and paid its debt to the Englishman; but the nemesis of temerity descended upon Henry's allies. Wullenweber, despite Henry's intercessions, paid for his dreams upon the scaffold; the blacksmith was killed and quartered for a traitor. Henry had embarked on the affair partly to win a fresh opinion for the divorce, partly to annoy the emperor, partly to obtain

a new recruiting ground, but also as a political speculation in which for a small venture of money he might gain a crown. In this last expectation he was cheated; but if he had not accurately gauged the general situation, at least he was not gravely compromised, and the struggle, ending as it did with the establishment of the Lutheran Church in Denmark, tended to strengthen his position in Europe. CHAP. XIII.

Meanwhile negotiations were proceeding for an alliance with the protestant league in Germany. It was represented on December 15, 1535, by the English envoys, at the diet of Smalcalde, that Henry was desirous of advice as to the reforms which might be effected in England in matters of faith; that he was not averse from the general council, if it were free, if it were summoned to a safe and convenient place, if its decisions were governed by God's word and not by the canons, and if pope and cardinals appeared not as judges but as parties. To this the German princes replied that Henry should be defender of their league, but on one condition only. He must accept the Augsburg confession, promote it in his own kingdom, and defend it in a future general council. They repudiated the idea of a political union without a concordat on the essentials of the faith. This was the rock upon which all schemes for common action were doomed to founder. Henry replied that "he had been long minded to set forth true and sincere doctrine; but being a king, reckoned somewhat learned, and having also so many learned men in his realm, he could not accept at any creature's hand the observing of his and the realm's faith, the ground whereof is in Scripture". He was willing, however, to confer and conclude with learned men sent by the princes; but he held that ceremonies might differ and should be ordered by the governors of every province. In other words, Henry determined to be master in his own house and to settle the faith of his English Church in his own way. Meanwhile he was well content that those eminent divines, Fox, Heath, and Barnes, should labour for religious concord at Wittenberg; and that erudite German doctors should bring their opinions to London, where they could be discussed by English theologians to the confusion of pope and emperor, and with no risk whatever to the autonomy of the English Church.

A careful handling of Scottish and Irish affairs was almost

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as essential to the uninterrupted progress of the revolution at home, as was a well-contrived fabric of foreign alliances. In Scotland James V. had succeeded, in 1528, in throwing off the tutelage of the Earl of Angus, who was triply odious to him as a Douglas, a stepfather, and a friend of the English connexion; and once delivered from "thraldom and captivity" the young man was determined to follow his own devices. Influenced by the reckless and violent group of nobles who surrounded his licentious mother and her third husband Henry Stewart, James declined to recall Angus, the pensioner of England, at the command of an uncle who through Angus was obviously intent upon riveting English domination on the Scots. But while England was allied to France, James could hardly provoke a war; and in December, 1528, a five years' peace was concluded between the uncle and the nephew. Five years passed of amity on the surface and ill-will at the heart, of Scottish intrigues in Ireland and English forays on the border. James reached a marriageable age, and with England embroiled with papacy and empire, might easily be enticed into the meshes of the imperial alliance. Charles sent an envoy to Scotland to offer the young man the hand of his Danish niece; Henry, on the contrary, planned to marry James into England, to compel the restoration of Angus, and to draw Scotland into a repudiation of the papal claims. To Sir Adam Otterburn, a Scottish envoy who was in London in the spring of 1534, Cromwell and Audeley showed "certain dishonourable and heretical articles" which, greatly shocking the orthodoxy of the Scot, were hastily withdrawn. To papacy and empire Henry wished to oppose the impressive spectacle of England, France, and Scotland linked together in brotherly love. He allowed James to reject the insidious Angus; he spared his catholic susceptibilities; he was content that a peace should be made on May 12, framed to last for the joint lives of the two kings and fortified by a special provision that it should not be infringed upon pretext of any ecclesiastical censure. Later in the year he sent the Garter to his nephew, and proposed that the three allied sovereigns should meet at Calais in 1535. He did not obtain, perhaps he did not expect, the friendship or the confidence of James; but at least he had secured a peace with Scotland during the early and critical stages of the ecclesiastical revolution.

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Thirteen years before these events a lord-lieutenant of Ireland had represented to the English government that the land could never be brought "into good order and due subjection" save by a systematic course of conquest and colonisation. The smallest force required for a gradual reduction of the wild Irish was estimated at 2,500, for a rapid conquest at 6,000 regular troops. But however prudent Surrey's advice may have been, it involved an outlay which a government bent on supporting an ambitious policy on the continent was reluctant to afford. In lieu of the expensive and futile raids which had signalised the period of Surrey's administration, Henry prescribed a policy of diplomacy and conciliation, of "sober ways, politic drifts and amiable persuasions," and after Surrey's recall in 1521 economy became the governing factor in the relations of England to the Irish dependency. The supreme administrative office, instead of being entrusted to a high-born English soldier whose military requirements were in proportion to his station, was given first to Sir Piers Butler, and then to Gerald Earl of Kildare, the respective heads of the two great Anglo-Irish factions. Neither plan proved to be successful. The house of Butler, whose tradition it was to rely upon the support of England, was not sufficiently powerful to control the Geraldines, who possessed great influence in the Pale and among the O'Neills of Ulster, and Butler's short tenure of power was marked by lawlessness and civil war.

Kildare bore a greater name; but his loyalty was suspect, and he certainly had no interest in promoting the spread of English law and manners. It was reported in 1526 that scarcely a word of English was heard in the county of Kildare; that the inhabitants continued for the most part to dress in the Irish fashion, and that save Dublin, Drogheda, and a few lords' houses, the Pale itself had become all Irish. The poor gentlemen on the marches had intermarried with the native stocks; the great landlords were absentees; the nobility had ceased to keep English yeomen in their households. Kildare was accused by his old enemy, Sir Piers, of disloyalty, called to London and committed to the Tower. When Wolsey charged him of being King of Ireland he is reported to have replied that Wolsey was quite as much a King of England. "I slumber," he continued, "in a hard cabin, when you sleep in a soft bed of down; I serve

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under the king his cope of heaven, when you are served under a canopy; I drink water out of my skull, when you drink wine out of golden cups."[1] For two years Kildare was detained in London as the hostage for the loyalty of his house, while the office of vice-deputy was exercised in turn by Sir James Fitzgerald, by Roger Nugent, Baron of Delvin, and by Sir Thomas Fitzgerald, the earl's brother. The state of Ireland was no whit the better for the change, and the capture of Delvin by the O'Connors in 1528 was a sufficient advertisement that the country could not be administered without the help of the Geraldines. Accordingly, in 1529 Kildare was allowed to return, and while the titular office of lord-lieutenant of Ireland was conferred upon the Duke of Richmond, the real work of government was entrusted to his deputy, Sir William Skeffington. The deputy was a Leicestershire man, an expert and honest soldier, the master of Henry's ordnance, and consequently known to the colony of the Pale as "the gunner". He was instructed to reconcile the feuds of the Desmonds, Geraldines, and Butlers, to make no hosting without the consent of the council, and to share with Kildare the profits of any joint expedition against "the king's rebellious subjects of the wild Irishry". The "gunner" with his handful of 200 horse was no match for the most powerful lord of the Pale whose daughters were married into some of the greatest houses of the Irishry. By 1532 Kildare had shouldered him out of the country and obtained for himself the coveted office of lord-deputy. In the hour of his triumph the Butlers were not forgotten, and many a smoking homestead in Kilkenny testified to the continuance of a feud to which the Duke of Norfolk was disposed to ascribe most of the miseries of Ireland.

The Irish problem was indeed one the dimensions of which the Tudor government was unable to calculate with any degree of accuracy. There was no map of the country; there were few or no roads; the vaguest notions existed as to the size, shape, and population of the island. No English deputy had penetrated into the wilds of Connemara or explored the solitudes of Northern Ulster. The wild Irish who lived "west of

[1] Kildare, however, had a good supply of plate and an excellent library of Latin, English, French, and Irish books (*Hist. MSS. Commission*, Report ix., 2, pp. 264-65).

the Barrow and west of the law," followed the ancient tribal customs of their race, spoke a language which was unintelligible to the English, and bore names of which an Englishman complained that they belonged rather to "devouring giants" than to "Christian subjects". A sketch of the country written down at the beginning of Henry's reign described it as divided into more than sixty counties or regions "inhabited with the king's Irish enemies," and governed by more than sixty chief captains, "whereof some calleth themselves kings, some king's peers in their language, some princes, some dukes, some archdukes, that liveth only by the sword and obeyeth to no other temporal power, but only to himself that is strong".[1] At intervals attempts were made to punish the transgressions of some of the clans thus vaguely indicated. A deputy would squeeze a fortnight's victuals out of the miserable inhabitants of the Pale, proclaim a hosting, and, accompanied by a miscellaneous rabble of kernes and galloglasses, ride across the border. He would fire some cabins, lay waste some crops, hunt some cowering tribesmen into the woods, and then the campaign would degenerate into a cattle-raid. A couple of hundred kine would reward the organiser of victory, and while the king's enemies remained unimpressed, the costs of the expedition would fall upon the poor tenantry of the Pale. It is significant of the futility of these operations that the number of shires had remained unchanged since the days of King John.[2]

John Alen, the master of the rolls, came to England in 1533 with a report upon the disorders of Ireland. He attributed much to Kildare, to the frequent change of deputies, to the ruinous experiment of entrusting the government of the Pale to native Irishmen; and while making some recommendations, which could not possibly be carried into effect, such as that the Scots should be expelled from Ulster and that the heir of every Irish chieftain should be sent to learn English in a borough town, he urged a course which was both practical and prudent, the appointment of a permanent English deputy. The English government was persuaded that Kildare had abused his trust, summoned him to London, and cast him into the Tower. Before leaving Ireland the great chieftain had entrusted the

[1] *State Papers*, ii., 1-31; *Letters and Papers*, ii., 1366.

[2] C. Litton Falkiner, *Illustrations of Irish History*, pp. 103-142.

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sword of office to his eldest son Thomas, a tall, handsome, impetuous young Irishman, with a rich rolling brogue, a large easy temperament, and a greater supply of wit than of judgment. A rumour was spread abroad by the enemies of the Geraldines that Kildare was executed, and that his whole family was marked out for destruction. The headstrong boy fell into the trap, solemnly renounced the ensigns of power in the monastery of St. Mary in Dublin on June 11, 1534, and declared himself to be the enemy of the king. The slender tie which bound the two kingdoms together seemed as if it might be violently severed. Dublin was besieged by the insurgents; Alen the primate, member of a hostile clan, was foully murdered on the beach near Clontarf as he attempted to escape to England. Lord Thomas—"Silken Thomas," the bard named him from the silken fringe on his helm—sent emissaries to ask aid of Paul III. and Charles V., boasted himself to be the pope's man, and promised James Butler half Ireland if he would throw the weight of the Ormond interest into the scale against England. At the same time by the death of his father in the Tower, he succeeded to the earldom of Kildare.

There was no concerted national movement behind the revolt. Butler declined the bribe; the burgesses of Dublin made a stout defence; and in October, Skeffington and Sir William Brereton arrived in Ireland with a force sufficient at least to secure the capital from fresh outrage. In the following spring operations commenced in earnest. The castle of Maynooth, strongest of the Geraldine fortresses, was not proof against treachery, and with its fall the pith was taken out of the rebellion. The forces of Silken Thomas, who was hurrying to the relief of the beleaguered stronghold, melted away upon intelligence of the disaster, and soon afterwards the young leader surrendered to Lord Leonard Grey, who had arrived in Ireland July 28, as marshal to the English army. It seems certain that Grey, whose sister was the second wife of the old Earl of Kildare and consequently the stepmother of the rebel, promised that the captive's life should be spared; and the council of Ireland wrote to Henry to urge that the undertaking should be respected. But although it would not have revolted the royal conscience to execute a man who had surrendered upon terms, an immediate execution would, as Norfolk pointed out to Crom-

well, have been an act of impolicy. It would ruin the credit of Grey and Butler; would prevent future surrenders; would compel Henry to proceed to a general conquest, and put a new grievance in the mouths of those who were already disaffected to the king's government. Henry accepted this view of the situation. He pacified Grey with gifts of land and money; marked out the five uncles of the young earl for destruction, and decided to postpone the execution to a more convenient hour. The zeal, energy, and craft of Lord Leonard Grey, who succeeded Skeffington as deputy on January 1, 1536, enabled him to accomplish this purpose. The fiery embers of the rebellion were stamped out. Three of the Fitzgerald uncles were invited to dine with the deputy at Kilmainham, and then perfidiously manacled; the other two were seized before they had learnt of the calamity which had overtaken their brethren. The last act of the drama was played on February 3, 1537, when Silken Thomas and his five uncles were led out to suffer the traitor's death at Tyburn. They, too, may perhaps be numbered among the martyrs of the catholic cause.—

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CHAPTER XIV.

THE FALL OF THE MONASTERIES.

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WHILE Europe was digesting the strange and horrible news of the execution of Fisher and More, the king was rapidly pushing forward the reformation of the Church. The submission of the bishops had already been secured, and at a council summoned in January, 1535, they were compelled to recognise that the supreme head of the Church could make and unmake them at his pleasure, and to sign a formal deed abjuring the papal authority. There appears to have been no hesitation, and Lee, the Archbishop of York, who was suspected of lukewarmness in the king's cause, put in repeated and energetic disclaimers. Gardiner, who had shown some independence in the matter of the answer of the ordinaries, was likewise thought to be favourable to papal authority. But he was one of those statesmen who hold the view that an act of parliament discharges the conscience and is binding upon the subjects of the kingdom. In a conversation with John Mores in Lent, 1535, he said that the primacy of the Bishop of Rome began by the policy of man, and that since then clerks had applied Scripture to prove that the primacy had its beginning of God which he thought could not be truly maintained.[1] His conscience was not perhaps completely at rest; but the sedatives which he was now applying to it were sufficient for the immediate purposes of the government. Upon the bishops lay the duty of licensing preachers to denounce the authority of the Bishop of Rome, of deleting the name of the pope from missals and prayer books, and of setting forth the king's title every Sunday and other feast-day throughout the year.

In spite of the proved pliancy of the episcopate it was de-

[1] *Letters and Papers*, viii., 592.

cided to entrust the execution of the main design to the hands of laymen. The country had had much experience of episcopal visitations, and if we may judge from the writings of St. Germain there was a feeling among the laity that they were apt to be more pompous than effectual. In any case the bishops were debarred from visiting the exempt monasteries, the control of which had now been statutorily transferred from the pope to the king. Accordingly on January 21, 1535, a commission was issued to Thomas Cromwell, already chief secretary and master of the rolls, to hold, as vicar-general and vicegerent of the king in all his ecclesiastical jurisdiction within the realm, a general visitation of all the churches, monasteries, and collegiate bodies in the kingdom. The terms of the commission were extraordinary, and co-extensive with the ecclesiastical powers now claimed by the crown. The vicar-general was in fact an ecclesiastical dictator, whose office was designed not only to carry out a radical plan in a swift and comprehensive manner, but also to illustrate the principle that the authority of the bishops was derived from the crown, and that their functions might be suspended by a royal commission. With some astonishment and no little indignation the bishops learnt that their visitations were inhibited in order that the vicar-general might remodel the Church. The new constitutions, as Cromwell told Chapuys in June, would be "very different from the papistical ones"; and would doubtless afford "a true and singular mirror to all Christendom," so that "the emperor would not forbear to make the same reformation in his own country". The plan to which Cromwell was alluding comprised among other features a vigorous assault on the monastic system.

The notion that Church property was a thing too sacrosanct to be touched had never been uncontested even in the ages most conspicuous for faith. Under Edward II. twenty-three preceptories of the Templars had been dissolved, and their lands only partly restored to religious uses. In 1410 the commons had petitioned for the confiscation of all the property of the Church. A little later the property of the alien priories, which had been more than once sequestrated during the French wars, was seized by Henry V. and partly devoted to schools and other monasteries. William of Wykeham and Chichele, Waynflete and Fisher, Alcock of Ely and Smith of Lincoln had all diverted

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wealth from monastic into educational channels, and this idea of utilising conventual revenues for the promotion of learning and culture had been carried out on a large and impressive scale by Wolsey. Nor was this the only way in which the wealth of the monasteries was attacked. Pensions and corrodies upon monastic estates were frequently granted by the crown and formed a convenient method for rewarding officials and courtiers. Indeed, a general idea had arisen that the monks had more wealth than was good for them or for the country, and that the mortmain acts having failed of their designed effect, some measure of secularisation was inevitable. "The monks have more already than they are like to keep," said Bishop Oldham in 1506, dissuading his friend Fox from a further endowment of them. But how much they had was a matter for sensational rumour rather than for strict inquiry. A pamphleteer said that the spirituality owned half the realm. As a matter of fact the revenue of the spirituality was a little over £320,000, and that of the monasteries about £140,000.

These overdrawn notions of monastic wealth were accompanied by a declining interest in the monastic ideal. In the period which elapsed between 1399 and 1509 only about eight religious houses were founded. Colleges, schools, and hospitals attracted endowments which in earlier times would have founded an abbey or a cell. At the same time, with the growth of material prosperity, with the formation of new fortunes and the rise of a new middle class, the appetite for the land had become keener and more general. New men began to cast longing eyes at the broad acres of the abbeys. The monks were often strict landlords, who enclosed, evicted, engrossed, farmed, in a word, for profit; and jealousy was aroused among laymen by the difficulty of getting farms from the abbeys, and by their general preference for clerical bailiffs over lay tenants. In more than one ballad of the time the abbey is held up to opprobrium as a hard landlord and as contributing to the misery of the poor. Yet scientific statistics, had they been available, would probably have demonstrated that in the aggregate the lot of the peasantry was easiest on the monastic estates.[1]

By abandoning the ideal of strict seclusion and by mixing

[1] Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce* (1905), i., 530.

in the affairs of the world the abbeys had filled a large place in the medieval economy. They served as inns for travellers, as distributors of relief to the poor, as places of deposit for jewels and title-deeds, as pioneers in farming and in the wool trade, and as centres of learning and education. Abbots were sometimes named commissioners of sewers, and sometimes, though more rarely, were placed upon the commission of the peace. But with the growing differentiation of functions which accompanies all social advance, the abbey, coming into competition with other agencies, and peculiarly exposed by its privileges and constitution to the dangers of apathy, lost much of its old influence. In particular, though still contributing scholars to the universities, the monasteries had ceased to command respect as homes of learning. They produced no chronicles; in the small houses there were priests who could not even construe the rule of their order, and since William Selling brought Greek manuscripts to Reading, not a single contribution to the progress of letters was made by an English monk.[1] In the neglect of the profounder studies, the time which was spared from the routine of devotion was divided in well-regulated establishments between the necessary care of the farm and the fabric and such innocent avocations as embroidery and sewing, the copying of manuscripts, and the arts of the carver and the painter. But not all establishments were well-regulated, and some of the monastic avocations were far from innocent. CHAP. XIV.

Still, in the exercise of hospitality and in the distribution of alms, the abbeys discharged functions calculated to blunt the edge of popular hostility. The great priory of Hexham provided shelter and food to the northern levies in their forays across the border. Ambassadors passing to and fro across the Channel were harboured and refreshed by the monks of St. Martin's at Dover. The abbey of Netley, standing at the edge of Southampton water, was "to the king's subjects and strangers travelling the said seas great relief and comfort"; and wherever a house was well-placed, well-administered, and well-to-do, the

[1] According to Reginald Pole, Reynolds, the Carthusian, was the only monk in the country who knew Greek, Latin, and Hebrew (*De Unitate Ecclesiastica; Letters and Papers*, x, 975). Two other Carthusians, Middlemore and Exmew, seem to have been equally learned (H. Clifford, *Life of Jane Dormer*, ed. Stevenson, p. 17).

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abbot's table was frequented not only by stray travellers but by the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood. Everywhere it was part of the fundamental rule of monasticism that hospitality should be freely exercised by the monks. Yet with the growing consciousness of the corporate character of the state, questions began to be asked with regard to those two functions of hospitality and alms. Was the hospitality duly exercised? Were the alms properly administered? Or did they tend to encourage the sturdy vagabond?

The visitation of the monasteries began in July, 1535, soon after the execution of Sir Thomas More, while the king was hunting in Gloucestershire, and the court preachers were endeavouring to persuade the rustics of the Cotswolds that his majesty's recent marriage was the act of God. "Wherever the king goes," reported Chapuys, "Cromwell goes about visiting the abbeys, making inventories of their goods and revenues, instructing them fully in the tenets of the new sect, turning out of the abbeys monks and nuns who made their profession before they were twenty-five, and leaving the rest free to go out or remain."[1] Cromwell was, however, too deeply involved in affairs to carry out the visitation single-handed. The task was delegated to agents who were furnished with a set of eighty-six articles of inquiry (a manuscript of which is in existence with corrections in Cromwell's hand) and with twenty-five injunctions to which they had powers to add. The articles of inquiry were minute, comprehensive, and well adapted to check the multifarious abuses which were suspected to exist in the exempted monasteries for which they were specially designed. The injunctions were so framed as to be provocative of disobedience or surrender. Taken in combination, these two instruments demanded a standard of loyalty and discipline which imposed a severe strain upon the conscience and cohesion of the monastic community. The head of every religious establishment was commanded to preach the king's succession, to instruct his brethren that "the king's power is by the laws of God most excellent of all under God in earth, and that the Bishop of Rome's jurisdiction by no means is founded or established by the Holy Scripture". No monk or nun might leave the precincts or receive visitors. All entrance to the monastery

[1] *Letters and Papers*, ix., 58, 434.

was to be by the foregate alone, watched and kept by some porter specially appointed for the purpose. All monks and nuns under twenty-four years of age were released from their vows and discharged. If the injunctions were infringed, it was open to any member of the community to denounce the offender to the king, to his vicar-general, or to his deputy. These requirements were severe. The monasteries were commanded not only to accept but actively to propagate the repudiation of the papal claims; and the close confinement to the monastic precincts was bitterly complained of, not only as being irksome in itself, but as inconsistent with the supervision of estates which were often scattered over several counties. Nor was it easy to preserve the discipline of the house, when every brother received encouragement to denounce his superior to the government.[1]

It has been argued from these requirements that the intention of the crown was not to reform the monasteries but to make monastic life intolerable, and to break down the system as soon as possible. But although this was undoubtedly Cromwell's goal, it is probable that Cranmer hoped and expected to retain the monasteries in a purified form, and that the king had not yet brought his mind to a complete destruction of the system. The unbiassed reader of the articles and injunctions sees that the tests proposed are severe, but cannot fail to recognise that the two documents contain the core of a stringent and salutary reformation. At every refection a chapter of the New or Old Testament was to be read by one of the brethren. The abbot was to have one table for himself and his guests, and that "not over sumptuous, and full of delicate and strange dishes, but honestly furnished with common meats". The leavings of the table were to be distributed by an almoner, who was warned against giving victuals "to such valiant, mighty, and idle beggars and vagabonds, as commonly used to resort about such places". The abbot or president was instructed "to keep or find in some university one or two of his brothers, according to the ability and possessions of the house," that they might return sufficiently equipped "in good and holy letters" to give instruction to their community and to preach the word of God. Every day for the space of one hour a lesson in Holy Scripture was to be kept in the convent to which

[1] Wilkins, *Concilia*, iii., 786-91.

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all were compelled to resort. The monks were forbidden "to show any relics or feigned miracles for increase of lucre," or to hold fairs or markets within the limits of the house. In impressive language the abbot, prior, or president, was exhorted to explain every day in English some portion of the rule which the community professed to obey; and in some of the houses teachers or divinity lecturers were appointed to "preach the pure and sincere word of God," and the doctrine that man is justified by faith alone.

The commissioners who were appointed to carry out the visitation were men upon whose word it is impossible to depend. They were all slavishly anxious for promotion, bent upon the discovery of damning evidence, and capable of accepting slanderous rumour for proven fact. Of the visitors of 1535 the most prominent, Dr. Richard Layton and Dr. Thomas Leigh, had been concerned in the examinations connected with the trials of Fisher and More. Of Leigh, his associate, John Ap Rice, reported that he was insolent and pompous, that he "handled the fathers very roughly many times for small causes, as for not meeting him at the door when they had warning of his coming"; that his countenance was "satrapike"; that he was "young and of intolerable elation"; that he took bribes to excess, and that he had twelve men waiting upon him in livery, all of whom had to be rewarded. Layton was vicar of Harrow-on-the-Hill, and ultimately was rewarded by the deanery of York. He accepted and approved bribes, helped himself to gold and silver crosses, and described the disgusting results of his inquiry in a series of volatile and slap-dash epistles. The visitors accomplished their labours with a despatch expected of Cromwell's agents, but inconsistent with a conscientious handling of the evidence. In August Layton is at Cirencester, at Bath, at Bristol, at Bruton, and at Glastonbury. At the beginning of September he is at Oxford; then he is in Sussex, discovering the cathedral church of Chichester "somewhat papistical with privy susurrations," and declaring after a visitation of Battle that "the black sort of devilish monks are passed amendment". From Sussex he swept on into Kent, where he had the satisfaction of condemning three houses before the close of October. Within the same brief period Leigh and Ap Rice had traversed Wiltshire, Hampshire, Berkshire, Surrey, Bed-

fordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk. The "comperts," or results of the inquiry, were sent up to Cromwell as the visitation proceeded. CHAP. XIV.

There was a reason for expedition. The monasteries, having got wind of the attack, might sell their jewels and plate before the hand of the crown was laid upon them. Meeting at Lichfield on December 22, Leigh and Layton scoured the northern counties. They had already represented to Cromwell their qualifications for undertaking a visitation in this quarter. "There is," wrote Layton in June, 1535, "neither monastery, cell, priory, nor any other religious house in the north, but either Dr. Leigh or I have familiar acquaintance within ten or twelve miles of it. . . . We know and have experience both of the fashion of the country and of the rudeness of the people. . . . There is matter sufficient to detect and open all coloured sanctity, all superstitious rules of pretensed religion, and other abuses detestable of all sorts."[1] In this spirit and armed with these preliminary expectations the two doctors rushed through the north, and by February 28, 1536, produced a report upon the houses in the province of York and the dioceses of Coventry and Lichfield so foul and hideous that were even a tenth of the charges capable of substantiation, it would justify the destruction of the whole system as a plague spot contaminating to society.

Meanwhile, on February 4, parliament had reassembled for what was destined to be the last and not the least memorable of its sessions. A rumour had got abroad in the previous autumn that the king had published an edict forbidding any abbot to sit in the upper house, and that it was intended that the religious of all orders should be free to leave their habits and to marry. Whether the king had ever contemplated the exclusion of the abbots from the debates which were to decide the fate of the monasteries cannot be determined. If the thought was entertained it was abandoned for a policy bolder, safer, and more in accordance with the royal methods, of associating every section in the community in an act of which some sections would violently disapprove. Cromwell advised the king to grant few licences of absence, and it would seem that by a judicious crea-

[1] Wright, *Suppression of the Monasteries*, Camden Soc., pp. 156, 157; *Letters and Papers*, viii., 822.

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tion of peers he could count upon a small lay majority in the upper house.

The early weeks of the session were consumed in the discussion and passage of a variety of measures, some of which are of the greatest importance. The crime and disorder prevalent in Wales had already engaged the attention of the government, owing to the representations of Rowland Lee, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, who was appointed lord president of the council of the marches in May, 1534. "Stout of nature, ready-witted, rough in speech, not affable to any of the Welshry, an extreme severe punisher of offenders," Lee was a typical product of the Wolsey school.[1] If he had never mounted a pulpit to preach a sermon, as a thief-taker he had few equals. In company with Sir Thomas Englefield, the justice of Chester, he travelled through the country, learnt its men and manners, discerned the secret roots of disorder, and set himself to pluck them out. The power of inflicting the death sentence was entrusted to his administration, and so lavishly exercised that it was said that within the space of six years over 5,000 men expiated their crimes on the gallows.[2] His reports to Cromwell were frequent, and for the first time since the suppression of the revolt of Owen Glendower the government in London was adequately informed as to the condition and requirements of Wales. Accordingly a series of acts was passed in 1534, based on the bishop's advice, and directed to the suppression of the "thefts, murders, rebellions, wilful burning of houses, and other scelerous deeds" of the principality and marches. The lord president and the council of the marches were empowered to punish jurors guilty of untrue acquittals by fine or imprisonment. The trial of serious offences was removed from the lordship marchers to the adjoining counties; the wearing of weapons was forbidden in courts, churches, and fairs. Officers within the marcher lordships were no longer permitted to plunder and imprison the inhabitants with impunity, but were made amenable to the control of the high commissioners and the council of the marches. Tribal customs tending to protect the guilty from the arm of justice were prohibited.

These were preliminaries to a more thorough organisation.

[1] *State Papers, Domestic, Elizabeth*, vol. cvii., no. 10; quoted by Miss C. A. J. Skeel, *The Council in the Marches of Wales*, p. 60.

[2] *Hist. MSS. Commission*, 1898; *Report on Welsh MSS.*, i., p. x.

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Over and above the unwillingness of juries to convict, the chief source of disorder lay in the regalities of the lord marchers. Here were a number of little kingdoms to which criminals could resort without fear of punishment or extradition, where, if fines were levied, they were levied for private profit, and not in open court, and where magnates like Lord Worcester or Lord Ferrers derived a revenue out of "the manifold selling of thieves". Lee reported that under the protection of Sir William Herbert there were living in the lordship of Magor five malefactors guilty of wilful murder, eighteen guilty of homicide, and twenty thieves and outlaws. Such a situation was clearly intolerable, and Henry's government determined to put an end to it by converting the lordships into shire ground. Accordingly an act was now passed for the incorporation of Wales with England. Henceforward justice was to be administered according to the laws and customs of England, and such other Welsh customs and laws as the king and his most honourable council should allow. The officials were to speak English; the legal proceedings were to be conducted in English; the marches were to be broken up into shire ground and to submit to the ordinary routine of English administration. The Welsh counties and boroughs were to send representatives to parliament. The king should have chanceries and exchequers at Brecknock and Denbigh for the four new counties, and a commission should be appointed to report upon such local laws and customs as might be worthy of preservation.

Bishop Lee, impressed by the lawlessness of some Welsh shires and believing that few Welshmen could be trusted upon the panel or the bench, thought that parliament had gone too far. He recommended a longer spell of exceptional jurisdiction, believed that it would be possible to cut the claws of the marchers to the point of innocuity, and held that the shiring of the march ground was premature.[1] But although the incorporation of England and Wales was not completed in all its details till 1543, there was never any intention to depart from the great principles laid down in 1536 by the first act of union in English history. The assimilation of the two peoples was a wise and successful measure, justified by the peace and order

[1] *State Papers*, i., 454; *Letters and Papers*, x., 453.

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which resulted from it, and facilitated by the passionate loyalty of the Welsh for the Tudor monarchy.

With similar intention, parliament enacted that all writs in counties palatine should run in the king's name, and that no one but the king should appoint justices or pardon treasons or felonies committed in those franchises. Ordinances were drawn up for the town and marches of Calais designed to fix the constitution of the government, to forbid the traffic in offices, to enforce residence and musters, and to anglicise so far as possible that dependency of the crown. Lands were not to be let to aliens without special licence of the king; spiritual persons were to reside in their benefices and use the English tongue, and two burgesses were henceforward to represent the town and marches in the English parliament.

Together with these measures designed in the interests of authority and uniformity, acts were passed to regulate uses, to limit the evils of benefit of clergy and sanctuary, to enforce the better payment of tithes, to arrest the progress of enclosures, and to cope with the standing menace of the vagabond. Of these enactments the statute of uses derives a peculiar interest from the fact that it had on two previous occasions been defeated in parliament, and that its passage gave rise to extreme irritation among the gentry. It may be described as an act for enabling the crown to recover death duties. By the common law of England the right of dealing with land by will was unrecognised, and real property descended according to the ordinary feudal rules and was subject to the ordinary feudal incidents. A custom had grown up of devising land to one person for the use of another, and the court of chancery had recognised that the *cestui qui use* possessed an equitable estate in land thus designed for his benefit. In this indirect way the liberty of testators had developed; men were able to make provision for their younger sons; and the overlord was deprived of the wards, marriages, reliefs, heriots, and aids which would have come to him if the land had followed the strict feudal rules of inheritance. The statute of uses was designed to prohibit a practice so injurious to the treasury. After making an ingenious display of the evils alleged to arise from these conveyances—the disinheritance of heirs, the uncertainty of purchasers, the loss of dowers to women, of dues to lords, of profits

to the crown—it enacted that persons entitled to the use of land should henceforth be deemed to have lawful possession of it, and consequently to be liable to all the incidents of feudal tenure. The act was unpopular as making against liberty of bequest, and was modified in 1540 by the statute of wills. Some hundred years however elapsed before the ingenuity of the chancellor succeeded in nullifying its effects. Meanwhile it continued to offer a serious impediment to anything like the trusteeship of freehold lands.

By the beginning of March, 1536, all was ready for the introduction of the great measure of the session. The popular feeling in the capital, already adverse to sacerdotalism, had been inflamed by pamphlets, sermons, and caricatures. Cranmer proved at Paul's Cross that all passages about Antichrist in the Scriptures referred to the pope, and indicated that the secularisation of the monasteries would relieve the people of the burden of taxation. Purgatory was denounced; books were circulated against images, and the adoration of saints. A proposal was made in parliament, probably by some independent member, that all ecclesiastical jurisdiction should be abolished. At last the results of the visitations were communicated to the legislature. "When their enormities," said Latimer afterwards, "were first read in the parliament house they were so great and abominable that there was nothing but 'Down with them'."[1] The government bill was, however, moderate in its scope. It proposed that all religious houses under a clear yearly value of £200 should be granted to the king and his heirs, with a stipulation that future grantees of the confiscated property should maintain hospitality and tillage. Occupation and pensions were guaranteed to such monks and nuns as were not transferred to other houses, and the rights of founders were safeguarded, possibly in response to symptoms of uneasiness shown during the course of the debates. In a passage which now serves as a preamble, but which was probably prefixed to the bill upon its acceptance, allusion was made to the "manifest sin, vicious, carnal, and abominable living" which had been brought to the royal knowledge "as well by the comperts of the late visitations as by sundry credible informations"; to the failure of continual visitations for the last

[1] Latimer, *Sermons*, p. 123.

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200 years to effect "an honest and charitable reformation," and to the contrast between the vicious living of the houses to be abolished, and "divers and great solemn monasteries of the realm, wherein thanks be to God religion is right well kept and observed". Hardly anything is known of the course of the debate. Sir Henry Spelman, who was born in 1562, reports a tradition that the bill stuck long in the lower house, and that the king eased its passage by summoning the commons into his gallery and telling them that he would have the bill or some of their heads.[1] In the upper house some one said that "these were the thorns, but the great abbots were the putrified old oaks and they must follow". "And so will others do in Christendom," cried Stokesley, "or many years be passed." The "great and fat abbots" accepted the bill, perhaps as Hall remarks, in the hope that their own houses might be spared from the hand of the spoiler. They had already abjured the pope; it was a lesser thing to accept the dissolution of the smaller monasteries.

By this measure some 376 houses were dissolved, and an annual revenue estimated at about £32,000 was obtained for the crown, in addition to the plate, jewels, and other household effects of the communities so condemned. The number of people, masters and servants, who lost their living by the act is computed by Stow to have amounted to 10,000, and of these possibly 2,000 were monks or nuns. The two counties most affected by the dissolution were Yorkshire, which lost fifty-three, and Lincolnshire, which lost thirty-seven houses. But a number of communities, variously estimated at 52 and 123, succeeded in purchasing a respite from the act, and it is significant that among the monasteries so re-established some had been gravely incriminated by Layton and Leigh.

The passage of the bill was probably assisted by the expectation that large sums would now be available for learning, religion, and national defence. An act was passed establishing a court of augmentations, whose function it should be to collect and administer the revenues from the dissolved monasteries, and from the lands purchased by the king. The officials were numerous and their salaries high; but the wealth which came under their control was only partially appropriated to public

[1] *The History of Sacrilege*, ed. 1698, p. 183.

purposes. The country gentry had scented the spoil from afar, and long before the bill was heard of at Westminster, Cromwell was besieged by the petitions of squires who wished to round off their estates, and to gobble up the tempting acres which had hitherto been locked in the dead hand. CHAP. XIV.

The storm which had shaken down so much fruit from the monastic tree did not spare the quiet quadrangles of Oxford and Cambridge, and some part of the attention of parliament was devoted to academic affairs. In the previous September, Layton had paid two visits to Oxford, where he accomplished the rout of the scholastics and the final discredit of Duns Scotus. "We have set Dunce in Bocardo," he writes to Cromwell, "and have utterly banished him from Oxford forever with all his blind glosses . . . and the second time we came to New College after we had declared your injunctions, we found all the great quadrant full of the leaves of Dunce and the wind blowing them in every corner." The commissioners established a Greek lecture in Magdalen, Greek and Latin lectures in New College and All Souls, and public lectures in Latin at Merton and Queen's. The civil law was in future to be expounded in every college, hall, and inn in place of the canon law, and provisions were added to promote the diligence and to secure the loyalty of the university.—

Cambridge made its peace with the world by inviting Cromwell to be its chancellor in place of Bishop Fisher. The royal injunctions were at the same time communicated to the university, which was apprised that two daily public lectures, one of Greek and the other of Latin, were to be established in fourteen colleges; that all divinity lectures should be upon the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament "according to the sense thereof and not after the manner of Scotus," and that the study of the canon law as well as "the frivolous questions and obscure glosses" of the scholastic commentators henceforward should be removed from the curriculum. The visitation of the university was assigned to Leigh of the "satrapike countenance," who found the heads of houses "very conformable touching the king's business," though many of them "being addicted to sophistical learning" were not too well pleased with the new programme of studies. In a series of injunctions the commissioners forbade the sale of fellowships or

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the taking of money for the reception of scholars, ordered the university to maintain at its own expense a public lecture in either Greek or Hebrew, and commanded the vice-chancellor, proctors, and heads of houses to send to Cromwell their charters, statutes, and bulls with a rental of their lands and an inventory of their goods. To these proceedings parliament was invited to add some final touches. In token of "the fervent zeal his majesty beareth as well principally to the advancement of the sincere and pure doctrine of God's Word and Holy Testament as to the increase of the knowledge of the seven liberal sciences and the three tongues of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew," the universities were relieved from the payment of first-fruits and tenths. Both universities were henceforward required to maintain a King Henry VIII.'s Lecturer, while by a statute enforcing the residence of spiritual persons upon their benefices, the universities were depleted of a number of residents who preferred the pleasures of college fare to the hard duties of parish life.

These measures accomplished, the reformation parliament was finally dissolved on April 14, 1536. Within the period covered by its sessions a great revolution had been carried forward, largely no doubt by the hard intellectual force of the two men who governed the country and controlled the machinery of terror, but aided also by a genuine propulsion of free opinion. The Church was severed from its legal connexion with Rome; the monasteries were struck; and while the canon law was proscribed as an object of university study, the approval of the government was given to the direct investigation of the Scriptures. Henry did not stamp out devotion to the papacy nor did he inaugurate the new learning at Oxford or Cambridge. Duns might be contumeliously handled in New College, but that society was destined to produce many an ardent champion of the old learning, such as Pits, Nicholas Sanders, and Harpsfield, who wrote the history of the divorce. But Henry killed the canon law in England, dealt a final blow to the vested interest, obstinate though dwindling, in scholasticism, and by his encouragement of Greek and Hebrew gave an additional impetus to a movement already strong in volume and promise, and destined to carry the country farther and farther from the ancient faith.

The cause of the reformation had hitherto been fatally linked to the king's marriage with Anne Boleyn. Anne herself, her father Wiltshire, and her brother Rochford, were all addicted to the new learning; and the whole influence of the queen's circle was thrown into the scale of rebellion from Rome. As nothing could give greater security to the reforming party than the continuance of Anne's power with the king, so no intelligence could be more sweet to pope and emperor than the fall of "the concubine," "the cause," as Chapuys once described her, "and principal nurse of all the heresies". Ever since the coronation, the lot of Anne Boleyn had been uneasy and precarious. She was unpopular in the country, hated by a powerful section of the nobility, and viewed as a source of standing embarrassment to commerce. In order to root out her influence and to establish the succession for Mary, powerful nobles like Darcy and Hussey professed themselves ready to embark upon civil war. Anne was uneasily conscious of the danger. So long as Catharine and Mary disputed her title, more than half England would continue to dispute it, and the simplest way to confound the opposition would be to extract from these two ladies an acceptance of the act of succession. Anne threw the whole weight of her insolence and her fears against her unfortunate rivals. The utmost compulsion short of physical violence was put upon the divorced queen and her daughter to accept the act. But Catharine refused to declare her marriage an imposture and her daughter a bastard, and Mary, confronted with the same outrageous demand, was equally firm in her rejection of it. Mother and daughter were brought into the full glare of Henry's resentment. They disputed the lawfulness of his second marriage; they declined to acknowledge his issue by Anne; and it was argued that the spectacle of their resistance would encourage others to be equally obstinate.

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In these circumstances, as Cromwell frankly acknowledged, nothing could so effectually mend the prospects of the government as that these inconvenient and conspicuous protesters should terminate their existence. Queen Anne, if Chapuys may be trusted, urged more than once that they should be put out of the way, and Henry once hinted darkly that Catharine was as guilty of sedition as Sir Thomas More and deserved the same fate. There were, however, potent objections to murder.

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It would inevitably light the flames of rebellion in England; it would probably provoke a foreign invasion; and it was not a proceeding of which Henry's intricate conscience would approve. A trial for high treason accompanied by due formalities and followed by an execution would be consistent with the royal scruples, and seems at one time to have been under consideration. But a judicial execution would have been open to the same broad political objections as the less constitutional course, and might have been more difficult to compass. Catharine and Mary then were permitted to live, but upon conditions which appear to have been framed to make their lives as uninfluential, as unpleasant, and as brief as possible. The mother was separated from her daughter; their households were cut down; they were placed under strict supervision, and moved into unwholesome neighbourhoods. On January 8, 1536, to the intense joy of the court, Catharine died a natural death at Kimbolton Castle. "God be praised," exclaimed the king, on hearing the news, "we are free from all suspicion of war"; and to Anne the event seemed equally auspicious. King and queen clothed themselves in yellow and celebrated the gift of providence with dance and revelry.

Long before this, Henry had wearied of his wife. Three months after the coronation, the king took a mistress and met Anne's expostulations with a brutal and humiliating reply. We hear of one favourite in the spring of 1534, of another in the autumn, of a third in the ensuing February. On September 10, 1535, the king stayed at Wolf Hall, a place in Wiltshire belonging to Sir John Seymour, and then, it may be, first made the acquaintance of his daughter Jane. In the following spring, Jane Seymour appears in the despatches of ambassadors as the reigning favourite. Her brother Edward is made a gentleman of the king's chamber, and by the middle of March, Jane is installed in the court at Greenwich. She was of middle height, pale, neither very intelligent nor very beautiful, a little over twenty-five years of age, somewhat haughty and reserved. Her fortunes were promoted by the papal and imperial party, for she had been in the service of the good Queen Catharine, and showed goodwill and respect to the princess.

Henry had taken advice as early as May, 1535, as to the possibility of a severance from Anne, but learnt that such a

course would tacitly confirm the validity of his first marriage and the authority of the pope. The events of the summer and autumn, the outcry raised at the execution of Fisher and More, the bad harvest, the persistent rains attributed by the people to the anger of God at the death of the martyrs, the unmistakable signs of sporadic ill-feeling, the difficulty of collecting the taxes, the refusal of the Lutheran divines to condemn the first marriage, the capture of English merchantmen by Prussians, Swedes, and Dutch, and the imposing brilliance of the emperor's triumph in Tunis which freed his hands for an enterprise against English commerce, all these facts and symptoms sank into Henry's watchful mind. He saw that the marriage with Anne would never be heartily or wholly accepted at home or abroad; and he began to feel a grudge against the woman for whose sake he had vainly squandered his popularity and his good name. The death of Catharine disclosed a prospect of relief. It would now be possible, supposing that Anne were removed, for the king to make a marriage to which no moral or legal objection could attach. One thing only could lift Anne's fortunes on to a securer level, the birth of a male child; but the male child did not come. There was only a girl born amid the contumelious joy of her enemies and to the chagrin and humiliation of the king. Then, on January 29, 1536, the day of Catharine's funeral, Anne's hopes were again disappointed. CHAP. XIV.

On that day Henry told some one in great confidence that he had "made this marriage seduced by witchcraft and for this reason considered it null; and that this was evident because God did not permit them to have any male issue, and that he believed that he might take another wife".[1] On April 27, Stokesley was consulted by one of the Seymour faction as to whether the king could abandon Anne, and prudently refused to commit himself until he knew Henry's inclination. But in the court, the royal inclinations were notorious, and the knights of the garter advertised the fact by electing Sir Nicholas Carew instead of Rochford on April 23. The conspiracy against the queen waxed stronger, and Chapuys, assured that Mary wished her downfall, even though a third marriage should bring the king lawful issue, urged upon Cromwell the advisability of pro-

[1] *Letters and Papers*, x., 199.

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moting the Seymour design. Cromwell was on perilous ground. He had been much associated with the queen, and had been the chief instrument in carrying out the forward religious policy, which conservatives like Norfolk and Suffolk secretly abhorred. The fall of Wolsey had been due to the repudiation of Catharine; the fall of Cromwell might easily follow the repudiation of Anne. The vicar general was conscious of the mutability of things all the more since, driving hard for an imperial alliance, he had been rebuffed by the tempestuous arrogance of his master. He determined to secure a further lease of power by compassing the destruction of "the concubine," and spies were set to watch her actions and report her words. On April 24, a special commission was secretly composed for the purpose of trying the case when the evidence was collected.

In that foul court evidence was always obtainable. Anne was a vain woman, fond of provoking admiration and not too scrupulous as to the terms in which that admiration was expressed; and some indiscretions committed in the later part of April gave to her enemies the handle which they required. On May 2 the queen was examined at Greenwich, charged with adultery, and sent to the Tower. A musician, named Mark Smeton, and Henry Norris, a young gentleman about the court, had preceded her through the Traitor's Gate, and six hours afterwards she was followed by her brother Rochford. Sir Francis Weston, William Brereton, Thomas Wyatt, and Sir Richard Page were added to the list of prisoners. On May 12 Smeton, Norris, Weston, and Brereton were tried, found guilty of treason as paramours of the queen, and condemned to die the traitor's death. Smeton, racked by torture and in hope of pardon, had confessed to guilt, but the other three protested their innocence to the end.

On May 15 Anne and Rochford were brought to trial in the Tower before the peers. The hall was crowded with spectators, and the tribunal, though consisting of twenty-eight members only, was representative of the English nobility, and presided over by the Duke of Norfolk as lord high steward. The queen saluted the lords, took her seat, and listened to the monstrous indictment which charged her with adultery, incest, conspiracy to slay the king, and conduct injurious to his health. Soberly and steadily she met the accusations which multiplied

round her. She denied that she had agreed to marry Norris after the king's death, or that she had poisoned Queen Catharine, or that she had intrigued for the death of the Lady Mary. She admitted that she had given Weston presents of money, as she had often done to other young gentlemen. So feeble was the attack that she was even charged of having laughed at the king and at his dress. No witnesses were summoned for the prosecution, no counsel was heard in the defence, but the verdict was unanimous, and, degraded of all her titles, Anne Boleyn was adjudged to be burnt or beheaded, as should please the king, on Tower Green. A skilful and intrepid defence—so impressive that wagers were laid at ten to one in the hall on an acquittal—did not save Rochford from a similar doom. On May 17 the sentence was carried out upon the queen's brother and the four other condemned men, and two days later, at nine o'clock in the morning, in the presence of Audeley, Cromwell, and others of the council, Anne was led to the scaffold which had been erected within the Tower. Obtaining leave to address the people, she spoke as follows: "Masters, I here humbly submit me to the law as the law hath judged me. As for my offences I here accuse no man, God knows them. I remit them to God, beseeching Him to have mercy on my soul, and I beseech Jesu save my sovereign and master, the king, the most godly, noble, and gentle prince that is, and long to reign over you." Then the sword of the Calais executioner descended on her neck. "The lady who had charge of her," writes Chapuys, "had sent to tell me in great secrecy that the concubine, before and after receiving the sacrament, affirmed to her on the damnation of her soul that she had never been unfaithful to the King."[1]

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"The most godly, noble, and gentle prince," celebrated the imprisonment of his consort by a series of nocturnal water parties on the Thames, and London opinion, though never favourable to Anne, was sound enough to be revolted at the strains of music and revelry which were wafted from the king's barges up to the midnight hour, and by the cynical disregard for clemency shown in the contrivance of so many deaths.

Two days before, on May 17, Cranmer held a court at Lambeth, and pronounced that the marriage of the king and

[1] *Letters and Papers*, x., 908.

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Anne Boleyn had been null and void from the first. This decision, logically inconsistent with a conviction for adultery, was probably required in order to save the king from the imputation of having executed his wife. The grounds upon which the sentence was given were carefully concealed, and indeed could hardly have been divulged without scandal, but two canonical objections could be urged against the marriage, an alleged precontract between Anne and the Earl of Northumberland, supported by some evidence but emphatically denied by the earl, and the king's own relations with Mary Boleyn. By whatever route it may have been reached, Cranmer's decision, which was ratified by convocation, made Elizabeth a bastard, and declared Henry to be a bachelor. On May 20, the day after Anne's execution, the king was betrothed to Jane Seymour. Ten days later the marriage was privately celebrated at York Place.

Parliament met on June 8. Active measures had been taken to secure a house of commons to the king's mind. Norfolk, who commanded five pocket boroughs in Sussex and overwhelming influence in the eastern counties, told Cromwell that in all the shires of his commission, save Lancashire, he had arranged for the election of such persons as "I doubt not shall serve his highness according to his pleasure". Cromwell named the members for Buckinghamshire, recommended a candidate for Leicester, upset the election at Canterbury, and desired the burgesses who had sat for Oxford in the last parliament to be returned again. The king wrote to the sheriffs to declare to the people that parliament was summoned for urgent causes, that the charge and time would be "little, short, and well spent," and that the members chosen must be such as "for their worship and qualities" were most meet to serve.[1] Nor did this exhaust the preparations of the government. The Princess Mary was by a course of brutal intimidation at last bullied into submission, and a week after the meeting of parliament set her hand to a document renouncing the pope, accepting the royal supremacy over the Church, and acknowledging the marriage between the king and her mother to have been "by God's law and man's law incestuous and unlawful".

[1] *Letters and Papers*, x., 815-17, 852, 903, 916, 929.

The acts of this parliament were few but important. The succession was settled on the king's offspring by his new marriage, and in case of the failure of lawful issue the king was given power to determine the descent by letters patent or by will. The issue of Anne was declared to be illegitimate, the marriage to be null, and the dead woman to be attainted. The king was thanked for his marriage, and a statute was passed giving to the king's heir power to abrogate by letters patent any act of parliament which might be made during his minority. That the hopes of the papal party might be finally dashed, an act was passed for extinguishing the authority of the Bishop of Rome.

If any hopes of catholic reunion survived parliament, they must have been finally shattered in convocation. On July 11 the Church of England received from the hands of King Henry its first confession of faith. Reaching back to the teaching of Wycliffe and perpetuated by secret Bible readings and the circulation of Lollard books, the movement in favour of dogmatic and ceremonial reform had been strengthened by the revival of Greek and Hebrew studies, but more particularly by the reformation movements on the continent. While distinctively and fundamentally English, it had drawn sustenance from German books and German examples, and in particular the little group of Cambridge men, of whom Cranmer and Latimer were the most conspicuous examples, had been in close connexion with the German theology. This group had now attained to a high position in the Church; and in the upper house of convocation the cause of the new learning was championed by six prelates: Cranmer, Latimer, Shaxton, Goodrich, Edward Fox, Hilsey, and Barlow. But what precisely were the theological tenets of the new school? Among the popular preachers the loudest and most violent form of the Lollard tradition was combined with scraps from the table of German theology, with denials of the freedom of the will, and disquisitions upon justification by faith, and sometimes with the more extreme tenets of the anabaptists. One preacher said that all goods should be common; another that priests and churches were unnecessary; a third, that "the singing and saying of mass, matins, and evensong is but a roaring, howling, whining, murmuring, conjuring, and juggling"; and the playing at the organs a foolish vanity. All ceremonies not

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clearly expressed in Scripture were condemned. "It is as much available," said one preacher, "to pray unto saints as to hurl a stone against the wind." Indeed the whole ceremonial and sacramental system of the Church was roughly and plainly called in question.

The ferment was very great. Quiet country villages, which had rarely heard a sermon out of Lent, were torn in factions; busy townsmen debated points of faith with a keenness which trade or commerce might envy. A country squire rode round with a gang of hired preachers, making converts, to the amusement of his neighbours and the gratification of Cromwell. Explosive lecturers fired off the new learning in calm monasteries to audiences of reluctant monks. The old-fashioned clergy were scandalised by this plague of sermonising, by zealots who preached two or even three times a week, by young fellows who imbibed Scripture instead of wholesome British ale in the taphouses. The new-fangled men poured vituperation upon the dumb clergy, "the strawberry preachers" as they were afterwards called, because, as Latimer said, they came "like strawberries, but once a year".

The idea of adopting the Augsburg confession, though proposed in parliament, had never been seriously entertained by the government, and would have been open to three objections in Henry's mind. It would have interfered with the autonomy which he was determined to assert for the English Church; it would have committed him to a dogmatic alliance with men who upheld his marriage with Catharine, and whose views upon matrimonial questions he considered to be unsound; and in the third place it would have been a barrier to a political understanding with the emperor. Henry regarded himself as fully capable of defining the belief and ceremonial of the Church, without assistance from foreign divines, and in the early spring of 1536 Cranmer was charged to take the matter in hand. Of the daily discussions among the prelates, which took place in the archbishop's house, no record has survived, but nothing was definitely settled when convocation met on June 9, under the immediate impression created by the execution of Anne Boleyn. Whatever may have been the hopes of a theological reaction, and the lower house of convocation was conservative, it was soon made clear that the legislative organ of the Church was

summoned to register the will of the crown. On the 16th, to the consternation of the prelates, Dr. William Petre entered the upper house and claimed to preside over its session, as the proctor of the vicar-general, at that time too closely occupied in parliament to take his seat; and the presence at subsequent sessions of Cromwell himself, enthroned above the archbishop and bishops, was a reminder that the headship of the Church was a very practical and living thing. The first duty required of convocation was the ratification of the recent sentence of nullity pronounced upon ambiguous grounds by the archbishop; and when this had been obediently discharged, the larger question of theological definitions was raised by a petition emanating from the lower house and directed against the evil doctrines disseminated by preachers within the province of Canterbury. CHAP. XIV.

The battle was now joined between the new and old schools and vigorously contested over several sessions. At last on July 11, Fox, Bishop of Hereford, appeared in the house with a book of ten articles, which had been drawn up by the king to terminate a quarrel which might otherwise have been indefinitely protracted. The royal eirenicon was read out, and dutifully subscribed by both houses. It stated that theological truth was contained in the Bible, the three creeds, and the decrees of the first four councils; it pronounced the three sacraments of baptism, penance, and the altar to be necessary. The catholic theory of transubstantiation was affirmed; the catholic analysis of penance was given, with its practical corollaries of confession, absolution, and amendment, testified by prayer, fasting, and alms. Good works, as well as faith, were declared necessary to justification, a compromise which the extreme Lutherans would have rejected. Images were allowed by Scripture, and had a symbolic value, as "representers of virtue and good example" and as "kindlers and stirrers of men's minds," but the superstitious veneration of them was condemned. It was permitted to honour saints and laudable to pray to them; but while rites and ceremonies, such as vestments, holy water, and lights were to be continued, it was to be understood that they had no power for the remission of sins. The last article dealt with purgatory. Prayers for departed souls were pronounced to be good and charitable; on the other hand, there was no Scriptural evidence as "to the place where the dead be, the name thereof,

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the kind of pains there also". It was therefore necessary to put away the superstition that pardons or masses could deliver souls from purgatory.

In this brief document, "devised by the king's highness' majesty to establish Christian quietness and unity," and owing much to German models, Henry, without traversing the whole surface of controversial theology, gave a decision upon the points in hottest dispute, calculated to quiet the apprehension of the older school. But while it was clear that the influence of the crown would be exerted to restrict, rather than to propel, the course of theological development, it was no less apparent that a distinct breach had been effected with the tradition of catholic Europe. The crucial point was not that the articles were conservative, but that they emanated from the king; not that they changed little, but that they changed something; not that they conserved ceremonies, but that they abandoned superstitions, and drew a line between the necessary and variable elements in belief. An independent English Church, under the king as supreme head, arranging its own dogma, selecting and interpreting its own ceremonies, was a revolutionary fact. Reginald Pole thought that the articles were well enough; but that they should have been issued by the king was, in his view, a piece of silly impiety.[1]

One last concession was wrung from convocation before it was permitted to dissolve. Henry had appealed to a general council from Clement VII. in 1534, and now he had been cited to appear in person or proxy before a general council summoned for 1537. Thinking it important to obtain from the Church of England an express repudiation of the authority of this body in advance, Henry caused a decree to be drafted denying that general councils could be properly summoned without the express consent of all Christian princes, "especially such as have within their own realms and seigneuries *imperium merum*, that is to say, the whole entire and supreme government and authority over all their subjects". In other words, all general councils were nugatory unless recognised by the supreme head of the English Church. The decree was a manifesto of Henry's

[1] *Poli Epp.*, i., 482; *Letters and Papers*, xi., 376. "Nescio ne magis pueriliter, an impie scriptum, quod Rex in illis articulis . . . se quasi authorem facit."

imperialism, and its acceptance by convocation marks the end of a noble dream, and England's withdrawal from the fellowship of the undivided Church.

In the course of the following August Cromwell issued a series of injunctions to the clergy, probably inspired by Cranmer and well calculated to effect a practical amelioration in the standard of clerical duty and in the range and quality of popular devotion. Incumbents were to declare the Ten Articles to their parishioners, and to draw special attention to the distinction between what they declared necessary for salvation and the rites and ceremonies instituted for "the decent and politic order of the Church". Sermons were to be preached at stated intervals against the usurped power of the Bishop of Rome. The clergy were no more to extol images or relics for superstition or gain, nor to exhort the people to make pilgrimages "as if blessings and good things were to be obtained of this or that saint or image". Instead of that the people were to be instructed to "apply themselves to the keeping of God's commandments and fulfilling of his works of charity," and to believe that God was better served by them when they stayed at home and provided for their families than when they went pilgrimages, and that the moneys laid out in these were better given to the poor. The clergy were exhorted to teach children the Lord's prayer, the creed, and the ten commandments in English, and to explain them, one article a day, till the people were instructed in them. A Bible in Latin and English was, before August 1, next coming, to be laid in the choir of every parish church within the realm for every one to read.[1] The clergy were instructed to see that all children were bred up to some trade or way of living. They should not, ran the seventh article, "for any other cause than for their honest necessity hunt or resort to any taverns or alehouses"; nor sit too long at any sort of games after their meals, but give themselves to the study of the Scripture or some other honest exercise; and remember that they must "excel all other in purity of life, and should be example to all other to live well and Christianly".

The poor were not neglected. Every beneficed person who had £20 or above and did not reside was to distribute yearly a

[1] Gairdner, *History of the English Church in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 177-78.

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fortieth part of his benefice to the poor of his parish, while every incumbent who had £100 a year was to give an exhibition for one scholar at some grammar school or university, who, after completing his studies, was to assist him in parochial work, and "so many hundred pounds as any had, so many students he was to breed up".[m] Parsonages in great decay were to be repaired out of the revenues of their incumbents. It had been agreed in convocation to diminish the excessive number of Church holidays, and on August 11 royal letters had been addressed to the bishops to give effect to this decision.[n] The clergy were now instructed to give a wider publicity "to the articles lately set forth for the abrogation of some superfluous holidays, particularly in harvest time".[o]

Such, then, was the spirit of the new Church policy. It did not repose upon a complete dogmatic survey; still less was it a capitulation to fanciful idealism. On its speculative side, it bore the marks of compromise; but at the same time it was a bold departure; not only by reason of its repudiation of the pope, but also because it aimed at promoting a general knowledge of the Scriptures in the vernacular, denounced the whole system of indulgences, and set itself to extirpate the grosser forms of popular polytheism. Judged by the light of the militant protestantism of the next century, the Ten Articles seemed to be "a medley religion". They are open to that interpretation for they preserve the Mass. But they contain a large part of protestantism in solution—a faith based mainly upon the Scriptures and lightly reckoning external shows.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE.

THE publication of the Ten Articles, read in the light of the Cromwellian injunctions, and followed by the dissolution of the smaller monasteries, showed the catholics how little their prospects had been improved by the disappearance of "the concubine". It was true that Princess Mary, having at last made her submission, was now treated with some show of humanity; but though the Duke of Richmond had died in June, 1536, to the joy of all who regarded him as a possible heir to the throne, nothing had yet been done to secure to Mary a place in the succession. Nor could the anxious catholic derive any solace from the complexion of foreign affairs. War had broken out between Charles and Francis, and to the French unprovoked invasion of Savoy the emperor had responded by inroads on Picardy and Provence. In Ireland the Geraldines had been crushed; and a parliament summoned by Lord Leonard Grey had voted a series of statutes to repudiate the authority of the pope, to declare Henry head of the Irish Church, and to dissolve the Irish abbeys. As the autumn approached Henry seemed again clear of embarrassment. He offered to mediate between Charles and Francis; told Chapuys that his master was in the wrong; informed the French that they might have his help if they renounced the pope; and solemnly proclaiming his neutrality in the continental war, pushed on his own more lucrative campaign against the nunneries and abbeys of England.

In the autumn of 1536 three commissions were issued, each of which was calculated to heighten the distrust conceived by the catholic party. There was a commission to levy the second part of the subsidy, 2½ per cent. on all incomes of more than

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£20 a year, voted in 1534, a commission to carry out the act of dissolution, and a commission charged with the duty of communicating the Cromwellian injunctions to the clergy, and armed with power to eject from their cures such parish priests as should seem to the commissioners to be inefficient. As these three different groups of officials spread over the country, the commissioners for the subsidy making minute inquiries into personal fortunes, the commissioners for the dissolution dismantling the abbeys, stripping the lead from the roofs, hauling down the bells and packing up the valuables to send them to the king, the commissioners for the injunctions submitting every parish priest in the country to a minute and odious cross examination, the temperature rose. "We be twenty brethren in this house," said a warlike canon from the walls of Hexham abbey to the royal officers, "and we shall die all or that ye shall have the house." In London and in the seaport towns of the south-east the proceedings of the crown were probably followed with the eager approval of a protestant minority, but in Cornwall and Devonshire, and in the rougher and more backward society of northern England, they aroused deep feelings of suspicion and hostility. The country-side was full of alarming rumours as to the sinister intentions of the government. It was said that "two or three parish churches should be put in one," that all the jewels, crosses, and other church ornaments were to be taken away, that there should be but one chalice in a church and that of tin, that the king proposed to have all the gold in the country brought to the Tower "to be touched"; that all unmarked cattle were to be confiscated; that a fine of a noble was to be taken for weddings, christenings, and buryings, and that licences would be required for eating wheaten bread, pigs, and capons. Nor were such rumours confined to one part of the country. They flew from Cornwall to the ridings of Yorkshire, and from the ridings of Yorkshire to the Scottish border.

The feeling in Lincolnshire was one of peculiar irritation. It was a backward county, a land of slow-going knights and squires, "meeter to be baillies" as one of Cromwell's agents reported,[1] and no county save Yorkshire was the scene of so

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xi., 888.

much havoc under the act for the dissolution of the smaller houses. In the first six months of his operations Freeman, the surveyor for Lincolnshire, had obtained for the king a sum of £8,756 11s. 9¾d.; and it was rumoured that Freeman and his agents were saying that after Michaelmas, when they had certified the survey of the lesser monasteries, they would return and dissolve the greater. On St. Matthew's Day, September 21, or the Sunday before, a tall serving-man, probably one of the staff engaged in the dissolution of the neighbouring monasteries of Louth Park and Legbourne, was standing in the church of Louth. As the silver alms-dish was handed round, he exclaimed aloud that it was "meeter for the king than for them," on which one of the congregation "fashioned to draw his dagger," saying that "Louth and Louthesk should make the king his master such a breakfast as he never had". The incident confirmed the worst suspicions of the inhabitants, and on October 1 the smouldering irritation burst out into flame.

It was a Sunday, and it was understood that on the morrow the king's commissioner and the bishop's chancellor would hold a visitation at Louth, the result of which would be to strip the churches of their chalices, and to leave no more than one parish church within a radius of six or seven miles. A rumour had flown in from the north that to anticipate the commissioners the men of Hull had sold their crosses and jewels, and that "if any should rise, all should rise and that it lacked but a beginning". As the silver crosses were borne through the streets of Louth in procession, Thomas Foster, a singing-man, called out: "Go we to follow the crosses, for and if they be taken from us we be like to follow them no more". The call spread from lip to lip, and after evensong a crowd gathered at the choir door, took the keys from the churchwarden, and appointed a guard of twelve armed men to watch the church during the night. A shoemaker named Nicholas Melton was elected captain, and appears to have been the guiding spirit in the earliest stage of the movement. The following day brought with it new developments. About 100 of the townsmen met at the church door and decided to ring the common bell, and at the sound of the alarm, a rush was made to secure the person of John Heneage, the lord privy seal's commissioner, who was understood to have come into Louth to carry out the dreaded visitation. The man was taken,

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saved with difficulty from the rage of the mob, and carried off to the church, where he was sworn to be true to God, the king, and the community. As the crowd dispersed homeward it was rumoured that Frank, the officer of Dr. Rayne, the bishop's chancellor, had descended at the Saracen's Head. Again the common bell rang out, and again an excited crowd hurried through the streets to lay hands upon this suspect personage. They hauled him to the market-place, lit a bonfire, threw his registers on the flames, and commanded that all English versions of the New Testament and other heretical books should be brought up and burnt before the populace. A number of priests had come in from the country to attend the bishop's court. They were sworn in, charged to ring their common bells, and to bring their parishioners on the morrow to a hill eight miles from Caistor, which had been appointed for a muster of the district. The next step was to secure Bellow and Milsent, two of Cromwell's receivers, who were known to be at Legbourne Abbey, a mile and a half off. A detachment of forty men rode out, fetched them into Louth, and succeeded in spite of the angry cries for blood—"all the country crying to kill Bellow"—in conveying them safely to prison. The movement was now fairly launched. Priests subscribed money; the commons threatened to hang the rich men at their doors if they refused to join; and proclamation was made from the high cross that all townsmen between the ages of sixteen and sixty should gather there on the following morning. There was no idea of contesting the royal authority. When it was known that among Frank's papers there were some bearing the signature of the king, the crowd on sight of the "king's writings" put off their caps and with cries of "God save the king" declared that they should be preserved from the flames.

On the morning of Tuesday, the 3rd, mass was celebrated in presence of the insurgents in Louth church, after which 100 men marched out upon Caistor to seize the commissioners of the subsidy. Hearing how Heneage had been handled at Louth, and apprehensive of a similar fate, the commissioners and the justices associated with them had taken the precaution to concert a meeting outside the town, and to explore the feelings of the inhabitants before venturing further. The first intelligence which reached them was reassuring, but as they

rode forward towards the town, news came in that 10,000 men were marching up from Louth. In Caistor itself passion ran high, and at the approach of the Marshland men overflowed its borders. The commons rang their bells, burnt the assessment books, refused to pay another penny to the subsidy; and the commissioners were soon galloping away as fast as their horses would carry them, followed by a score or so of the freshly-arrived Louth contingent. A monk named William Morland was the first to come up with the fugitives, and cap in hand desired them to return and to confer with the commons. "Trowest thou that if I should come amongst them, I should do any good and be in surety of my life?" asked Sir William Askew. Morland offered to ride back between two of Askew's servants, and to pledge his life that the commissioner would be safe, and on this assurance three of them came in and swore the oath to be true to "God, the king, the commons, and the Holy Church".

It is one of the remarkable features of the rising that at no time did it partake of a rebellious character. It was aimed neither against the king nor against property, nor against any of the established institutions of the country. It was rather a great conservative demonstration, prompted no doubt by the clergy, but agreeable to the spontaneous impulses of humble folk, and accepted with varying measures of sympathy or compulsion by the yeomanry and gentry. The objects of the insurgents, if they can so be called, were expressed in a petition which Sir Edward Maddison, one of the commissioners of the subsidy, was charged to carry to the king. It was desired that holidays might be kept as before; that the Church might be relieved of the payment of first-fruits and tenths; that the suppressed houses of religion should be restored, except such houses as the king had taken "for his pleasure only"; that the king should not hereafter demand any money from his subjects except for the defence of the realm in time of war, and that the bishops of the new learning, the lord privy seal, the master of the rolls, and the chancellor of augmentations should be delivered up and banished the realm. The movement was happily stained by few of the crimes which are usually associated with popular outbursts. The bishop's chancellor was clubbed to death; the cook of Dr. Leigh, who had made himself specially

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obnoxious during the suppression, was hanged, and the same fate nearly overtook a certain Wolsey reported to be a spy. The moderating influence of the gentry, the habit of obedience and local co-operation among the people, and the expectation that the king would concede to their demands seem to have prevented gross excesses.

The whole county was drawn into the movement. Horncastle rose on October 3, surprised Edward Dymoke, the high sheriff, at Scrivelsby Hall, and forced him to take the oath; and on Friday, October 6, 40,000 men, of whom 16,000 are said to have been harnessed, were gathered together at Lincoln under a linen banner, blazoned in token of the religious and social aspirations of the Horncastle men with the five wounds of Christ, a chalice with the Host, a plough, and a horn. Every social class and grade, peasants and squires, yeomen and artisans, clerks and monks, were represented in this extraordinary gathering. The abbot of Barlings with six canons in harness rode in on October 7. The monks of Bardney, of Kirkstead, and Revesby, had been swept along with the flood which flowed northwards from Horncastle. It was even calculated that the priests and monks in the Lincoln army mounted up to some 700 or 800 souls.

The most slender exercise of political judgment should have forewarned the commons that the king would resist their demands. Force, and force alone, could compel Henry to banish Cromwell from his counsels, to disgrace Cranmer, to restore the fallen monasteries and to arrest the course of the reformation. Bold measures were essential to success, but the commons had taken just the very course most likely to defeat their ends. They had terrorised the gentry into joining them in the expectation that the squires would provide them with leadership, and every day their camp was swelled by the retinues of men who had been compelled to swear the oath under a menace that their lives would be taken, their chattels despoiled, or their manor houses burnt over their heads if they stood out against the movement. Leaders so recruited were not likely to be ardent in the cause, and the motley assemblage which was gathered at Lincoln was rendered stationary, and, therefore, powerless by the policy of the squires, who, lodging apart in the close with the dean and canons, were anxious to preserve their credit with the court.

Sunday, the 8th, was a critical day. In the morning a series of articles which had been drawn up at a conference of the men of worship of Louth and Horncastle was read out to the commons. The articles were more moderate than the original demands which had been transmitted to the king, and the design of the gentry who drew them was to furnish another pretext for delaying the commons at Lincoln until the king's answer to the new requisition should be received. While the gentry and some of the commons were in the chapter house, two messengers arrived from Beverley with a letter addressed under the common seal to the commons of Lincolnshire, and containing assurances of sympathy and help. The commons were for going forward at once, but the gentlemen stayed them and the messengers were sent back to Beverley with a copy of the articles and a letter of explanation. Soon after this two men came in from Halifax, saying that their county was up and ready to aid. Again the zeal of the commons boiled over, only again to be quenched by the animated moderation of the gentry, who at the peril of their lives resisted a forward movement, representing that it would be high treason to decline to wait for the king's answer. Accordingly, on the following day the revised articles were written out fair, signed, and sent to the king, and the army, not without many withdrawals and misgivings, settled down to await a response. CHAP. XV.

Meanwhile, on the king's side active measures were taken to cope with the situation. Apprised of the Horncastle rising on October 4, the Earl of Shrewsbury summoned the Derbyshire levies to meet him at Nottingham on the 8th. A commission was issued to the Duke of Suffolk to lead an army against the rebels from the south, and while that experienced officer was gathering his levies at Huntingdon, the king commanded a second army to be collected at Ampthill on the 16th, which was to be placed under his own immediate direction. At the same time he sent a letter to rebuke the commissioners at Lincoln for the careless way in which they had allowed themselves to be captured, and to inform them that two great armies had been appointed "to invade their countries, to burn, spoil, and destroy their goods, wives, and children," unless the gathering were forthwith dispersed, and a hundred leaders despatched with halters round their necks into the camp of the Duke of Suffolk, the king's lieutenant.

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In war all depends on celerity. When Suffolk arrived in Huntingdon on the 9th, he found everything in a state of complete unpreparedness. There was no ammunition, no artillery, no pay; and such men as had been painfully drawn together, over roads sodden with autumn rain, were without weapons or harness. On the same day it was reported from Stamford that the walls of the town were weak, the river fordable in many places, and the hearts of the commons with the Lincolnshire men. If on the 9th or 10th the rebels had chosen to move southwards over the thirty-six miles which divide Lincoln from Stamford, they would have found no serious opposition to their advance. On the morning of the 10th the royalist force at Stamford was but 900 strong with no ordnance and no money, while Shrewsbury was held stationary at Nottingham for lack of pay. But three days later Suffolk and Fitzwilliam were posted at Stamford with 3,000 men, well horsed and harnessed, with a train of artillery and a sufficiency of pay, and would have been able to render a good account of themselves.

On the 10th, Maddison rode into Lincoln with the king's reply to the commissioners and a menacing letter from the Duke of Suffolk. As the royal message was read to 300 of the commons in the chapter house, a canon cried out, "It is falsely read," and the suspicion and anger which the commons had long entertained towards their leaders burst into flame. Some 200 vehement men withdrew into the cloister, and saying that the gentry clearly intended to betray the cause, agreed to kill them as they came out at the west door of the minster. If their purpose had been accomplished, it is probable that the army would have rushed forward against the royalists, and that the English reformation would have been inaugurated by a pitched battle. The violent party was, however, disappointed of its prey. The gentlemen were conducted by the west door to the safe shelter of the chancellor's house, and the commons determined to put off the slaughter till the morrow. The delay was fatal to the policy of advance. In the night the gentry sent for the most honest men of their companies and persuaded them of the danger of going forward; and on the morning of the 11th, harnessed and accoutred, with their trusty serving-men in array, they descended from the close into the town and argued the commons into a further spell of patience. On that very

evening Lancaster herald rode in with the long-expected reply from the king.— CHAP. XV.

It was couched in Henry's most superb style. He had never heard that princes, councillors, and prelates should be appointed by ignorant, common people, nor that they were meet persons to choose them. "How presumptuous then are ye," he continued, "the rude commons of one shire, and that one of the most brute and beastly in the whole realm, and of least experience to find fault with your prince in the electing of his councillors and prelates." The suppression of the religious houses had been granted by parliament and was not "set forth by the mere will of any councillor". It did not diminish the service of God, "for none were suppressed but where the most abominable living was used," and as for the relief of poor people, "many or most had not more than four or five religious persons in them, and divers but one, who spent the goods of their house in nourishing vices". The act of uses had been complained of. "We wonder," replied the king, "at your madness in trying to make us break the laws agreed to by the nobles, knights, and gentlemen of this realm, whom the same chiefly toucheth." The government was not so faint-hearted as to remit the fifteenth at the demand of a single or even of several shires, and as for the first-fruits they were granted by parliament also. Finally the commons were charged to disperse and to deliver into the hands of the king's lieutenant a hundred persons, on penalty of condign punishment and the indignation of God.[1]

The herald was discreet, and after some colloquy the commons consented to go home, leaving the gentlemen behind them to sue by letter for their pardons. Before Friday night the great gathering was dissolved; and on Saturday the 14th certain gentlemen came to the Duke of Suffolk, while the remainder of the most substantial men spread themselves over the country to prevent any further disturbance. On the evening of the 16th, the royalist vanguard under Fitzwilliam, Russell, and Richard Cromwell, the nephew of the lord privy seal, rode into Lincoln along streets filled with sullen men who would scarcely move their bonnets as the lord admiral passed by. The next day

[1] *State Papers*, i., 463; *Letters and Papers*, xi., 780.

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Suffolk arrived, with a mind prepared for a course of clemency, to be continued at least until the dangerous period of exasperation had subsided. Henry was, however, determined on severity. He commanded the execution of as many common traitors at Lincoln, Louth, and Horncastle as should seem requisite "for the terrible example of like offenders," and charged Suffolk if any new rising were attempted "to destroy, burn, and kill man, woman, and child".[1] But these hideous instructions were supplemented by counsels of a more politic character. Suffolk was permitted to assure such of the gentry as should prove to be compliant of the king's good-will, and to use their services in the pacification of the country. A similar promise of intercession was to be made to the multitude, if they would surrender their captains to royal justice, all save the towns of Louth and Horncastle, for which a sterner fate was reserved. The process of repression then proceeded rapidly. The leaders were handed over, the commons were sworn, wapentake by wapentake, gibbets were erected in Louth, Horncastle, and Lincoln, and finally in March, 1537, after a careful scrutiny into the circumstances of the rising, forty-six of the principal rebels suffered death upon the scaffold.

Meanwhile serious trouble had arisen in the north. At the beginning of October, 1536, a party was collected at the house of William Ellerkar in Yorkswold for the cub-hunting. It consisted of the brothers-in-law of the host, John, Robert, and Christopher Aske, members of a substantial Yorkshire family and allied through their mother with the powerful house of Clifford. John, the eldest of the brothers, was the owner of the family estate of Aughton; Christopher had land at Marshland, while Robert was at once a landowner in Yorkshire and a lawyer in good London practice. The vacation was drawing to an end, and intending to be in London two days before the term "to apply his great businesses at the law," Robert Aske accompanied by three nephews, two of whom were law students, set out for the south, at the moment when the neighbouring county of Lincolnshire was experiencing its first throes of agitation. Following the great north road he crossed the Humber by the Barton ferry, five miles from his brother-in-law's

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xi., 780.

place, and there from the lips of the ferryman learnt for the first time the outlines of the Lincolnshire rising. He rode on, was accosted by a band of mounted men, sworn in, and swept into the movement. The perplexing conflict of emotions and loyalties which were destined to bring the whole rising to nothing was now enacted in Aske's conscience. On the point of escaping northwards, he was recalled by the entreaties of his followers and made captain of a company. Two days later he was again across the Trent among his brother's people at Marshland in Yorkshire, who, agitated by the news from the south, appealed to him for counsel. He advised the Marshland men not to ring till they heard the bells of Howden, and told the men of Howden not to ring till they heard the bells of Marshland. Then he returned to Lincoln to await the answer of the king to the Lincolnshire articles. But his flight into Yorkshire had earned him the reputation of a traitor and, after a night in hiding, he again escaped to the north. As he crossed the Trent at midnight he saw the beacons blazing on the Yorkshire wolds. The country was up, and the next day the bells were pealing from all the steeples in Marshland and Howdenshire. Beverley had risen, enraged by the suppression of its local holiday; copies of the Lincolnshire articles were in the hands of the gentry; and the commons, hearing that Aske was hiding in a poor man's house, sent for him and compelled him to become their captain. For the next few months the Yorkshire lawyer was the most brilliant and arresting figure in England.[1]

The rising spread with great rapidity. Between October 9 and the 14th all Yorkshire was up in arms. Bills were set on church doors; ballads were composed; the gentry were drawn in by threats of fire and sword. The townships taxed themselves for the enterprise, each township giving its men twenty shillings a-piece, while the gentlemen served at their own charges. At the instance of Sir Nicholas Fairfax and Sir Thomas Percy, a message was sent round to the great Yorkshire abbeys to move the abbot or prior and two brethren from each house to come forward with their best crosses. From the first the movement wore the air rather of a religious pilgrimage than of a campaign. The men marched behind crosses taken from the parish church or the neighbouring abbey, styled themselves

[1] *Engl. Hist. Rev.*, v., 330-45, 550-73.

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pilgrims, were sworn not to enter "this pilgrimage of grace for the commonwealth, save only for the maintenance of God's faith and Church militant, preservation of the king's person, and purifying the nobility of all villein's blood and evil counsellors, to the restitution of Christ's Church and the suppression of heretics' opinions". As in Lincolnshire, so in the northern counties the dissolution of the monasteries was a principal grievance. "The abbeys in the parts of the north," Aske wrote some months afterwards, "gave great alms to poor men and laudably served God." They were "great maintainers of sea walls and dykes"; they built bridges and highways; they advanced money to the gentry; brought up their daughters in virtue, and wherever they were situated in "mountainous and desert places," they provided horse-meat and man's meat to the strangers and baggers of corn, whose business led them over the wild northern uplands of Yorkshire, Westmorland, or the Bishopric.[1] It was feared that with the profits of the abbeys and the tenths and first-fruits going out of the country to London, there would be little money left to sustain traffic in Yorkshire. Meanwhile the old hospitality was gone, and a new race of farmers intent on lucre had stepped into the place of the old-fashioned landlords.

Religion, though a large, was not the only factor in the movement. The statute of uses, the treason act, the illegitimacy of Princess Mary, the power entrusted to the king by the last parliament to devise the crown by will were all matters which aroused resentment. The odium with which Cromwell was everywhere regarded by aristocrats and conservatives, received in Yorkshire an additional spice of intensity from a circumstance connected with the locality—a heavy fine imposed upon a Yorkshire grand jury for declining to bring in a true bill in a recent murder case. Under the shadow of a movement which was political and religious in character, the poor took occasion to ventilate their peculiar grievances. In Cumberland and Westmorland the rising assumed a social complexion, and was directed mainly against the "gressums" or heavy fines exacted upon the renewal of leases.[2] At Cockermouth the people

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xii., i., 901, 405. Some evidence of the vigour of the Border monasteries on the eve of the suppression has been collected by Mr. J. Wilson, *Victoria History of the County of Cumberland*, ii., 44, 45.

[2] *Letters and Papers*, xii., 478, 687 (1, 2).

robbed the tithe-barns; in Westmorland they threw down the Earl of Cumberland's hedges; and the cry against the exactions or the inclosures of the landlords was too strong to be wholly ignored by the leaders of the pilgrimage. The rumours as to Church ornaments and other projects of fiscal exaction which had played so large a part in Lincolnshire were current all over the north, but in Aske's judgment, the suppression of the monasteries and the fear of heresy would in themselves have been sufficient to cause an insurrection. CHAP. XV.

As in Lincolnshire, so in the northern counties, the movement bore the character rather of a protest against the policy attributed to the king's counsellors and in particular to Cromwell, than of an insurrection directed against the king. Gentlemen and commons alike were agreed to proceed by way of petition, and only if petition failed to resort to the sword. But while this was the general scheme of operations, intimidation was freely practised within the disturbed area, and some few acts of violence and brutality were committed in the course of an agitation which was singularly free from popular excesses.

The man who was chiefly expected to uphold the authority of the crown in Yorkshire was Lord Darcy of Templehurst, warden of the forests north of the Trent, a proved soldier, with a record of long and honourable service to the Tudor house. Fifteen years before Darcy had volunteered to fight under the Spanish banner against the Moors, and, though he was now in his seventieth year, there was still in his composition something of the crusader and everything of the aristocrat. The new developments in the royal policy had seemed to him to constitute an intolerable revolution. He had described the robberies and spoilings perpetrated by Wolsey's commissioners at the pulling down of the abbeys as an offence equal "to the worst act or article of Martin Luther," and he hated Cromwell as heartily as he had hated the cardinal. So strongly did he object to the policy of the divorce that in a moment of impatience he proposed to Chapuys, that imperial troops should be landed in the north of England to stiffen the protest of his catholic friends against the heretical courses upon which the country was embarked. But though deeply sympathising with the spirit of the pilgrimage, Darcy was every inch a loyalist. "An I had seen my sovereign lord in the field," he said to Latimer afterwards

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when he was awaiting death in the Tower, "and I had seen his grace come against us, I would have lighted from my horse and taken my sword by the point and yielded it into his grace's hands."[1] Sending intelligence of the rising to the mayor of York and to Cromwell, Darcy shut himself up in Pomfret castle, where he was soon joined by the Archbishop of York and other members of the nobility and gentry.

The walls of Pomfret were strong and high, but Darcy was ill provided with pay, ordnance, and gunpowder, and by the advice of the vicar of Brayton the town refused to supply him with victuals. It is uncertain whether, in these circumstances, more especially as the serving-men in the castle were disaffected, his small garrison of 140 men, provisioned only for eight or ten days, could have made an effectual resistance. But the capitulation, which took place on October 19, was not purely decided by military considerations. Robert Aske, in addition to the energy and quickness which make the good soldier, possessed the eloquence of an orator and the self-restraint of a statesman. He was not above using intimidation when threats were needed; but he was opposed to purposeless violence, and aimed at keeping the movement within constitutional limits. With an eye quick to seize points of strategical importance he made himself master of York, while the commons sat down before the walls of Pomfret and Hull. But so long as persuasion could be effectual, Aske was unwilling to resort to force. At York he had forbidden pillage, fixed a price for food and drink, ordered the restoration of the monks to the suppressed monasteries, pending the receipt of an answer from the king. At an interview with the lords in Pomfret castle he vehemently declared the griefs of the commons—the spread of heresy, the violation of relics, the impositions of the visitors, the impoverishment of the march against the Scots, and threatened that if the castle would not surrender he would order an assault on the following morning. After vainly pleading for a respite, Darcy resolved to capitulate and to join the movement. The event was decisive. Aske stood free of the cloud of suspicion in which his moderation had hitherto enveloped him. The commons called him "the great captain"; Hull surrendered, and

[1] *Letters and Papers*, iv., 5749; Latimer, *Sermons*, p. 163.

every day brought recruits to the pilgrim army, which had successfully enrolled an archbishop and a peer. By the 24th a force of 34,000 or 35,000 men "well tried on horseback" was posted a little north of Doncaster. The vanguard serving under St. Cuthbert's banner was drawn from the bishopric, Cleveland, and part of Richmondshire, commanded by Sir Thomas Percy and accompanied by Lords Nevill, Latimer, and Lumley. In the second ward were Lord Darcy, Robert Aske, and Sir Robert Constable, with all the knights and squires of the North, East, and West Ridings, Holderness, and the Ainsty. The rearward, under Lord Scrope, was composed of the levies of Richmondshire and Ripon, Kirkbyshire and Mashamshire, Wensleydale, Swadale, and Netherdale. It was a gathering fully representative of the militant elements of northern society. CHAP. XV.

Having early intelligence of this formidable commotion, the king with characteristic vigour left no means unexhausted for its suppression. Norfolk, who had been in a cold shadow of disfavour until the Lincolnshire revolt had caused his usefulness to be rediscovered, was ordered to join forces with Shrewsbury, who was still encamped at Nottingham. As the Lincolnshire rebellion was over, part of Suffolk's force was now available for service in Yorkshire, and he was ordered to hold himself in readiness, should Norfolk require his assistance. It was one of the complaints of the pilgrims that villein blood had been admitted into the council; but the army which gathered at Doncaster to defend the policy of Thomas Cromwell was an exemplification of the alliance between the crown and the aristocracy. The Marquis of Exeter, the Earls of Rutland, Huntingdon, and Shrewsbury were serving under the royal banner, and the pilgrims who cried for blue blood were opposed by an army commanded by a duke and officered by some of the greatest nobles in England.

If an engagement had been fought upon October 26, all the chances of war would have been in favour of the insurgents. The force with which Norfolk was holding Doncaster was not more than 8,000 strong, and though the noblemen and gentry who served the king were loyal, there were, on Norfolk's own confession, very few of the common soldiers who did not believe in the justice of the pilgrims' cause. The weather was cold; fuel had run short, and as the plague was raging in the town a

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third of the king's army lay unsheltered from the elements. To oppose a dispirited uncertain force of 8,000 foot to an army of well-mounted zealots three times its number would have been an act of temerity; and by the advice of his officers Norfolk decided to treat. On his side Aske was equally unwilling to drive matters to the shock of battle. Victory or defeat would, in his patriotic mind, have been a disaster difficult to repair, and convenient only to the malice and rapacity of the Scots. A conference was held on Doncaster bridge; five articles were drawn up, and it was agreed that until the king's answer to these had been received, both armies should dissolve, and a truce should be proclaimed over the north of England. Sir Ralph Ellerkar and Robert Bowes, escorted by Norfolk and Shrewsbury, brought the demands of the pilgrims to the king at Windsor.

In moments of crisis Henry was his own prime minister, and the answer which Lancaster herald carried back to the north was dictated by the king himself.[1] He met the pilgrims point by point with the skill of a practised controversialist. If by the maintenance of the faith they meant the faith of Christ, he protested that it was his intention to live and die in it. He wondered that ignorant people should go about to instruct him as to what the right faith should be. They demanded the maintenance of the liberties of the Church, a phrase too general to be accepted without analysis. What was the Church and what were her liberties? "To our own Church we have done not so much prejudice as many of our predecessors have done upon less ground;" and as for the liberties some were lawful, and others unlawful. They complained of the statutes. None of his predecessors had enacted so much that was wholesome and beneficial. Justice was indifferently administered; the realm was protected from outward enemies; the subjects of the crown had enjoyed a long spell of prosperity and peace. The aristocratic composition of the king's council had been contrasted with the plebeian influences which were now predominant in it. Henry traversed the facts and denied that it belonged to any of his subjects to appoint his council. He defended the reforming bishops as "just and true executors" of God's law, and

[1] *State Papers*, i., 506; *Letters and Papers*, xi., 957.

ironically remarked that as the slander against them proceeded from a distant quarter and from persons who had never heard them preach, he was not inclined to credit it. In conclusion, he solemnly rebuked the arrogance of the rebel captains, and with a great profession of clemency promised his letters of pardon upon the delivery of the ringleaders of the insurrection.

The return of Ellerkar and Bowes with the king's answer, coupled with information that Norfolk and the lord admiral were coming down to conclude a treaty, was the signal for a conference at York on November 21, which was attended by 200 delegates chosen from the different wapentakes of the country. The truce had been imperfectly kept, and each party suspected that his adversary was trying to steal an advantage. Sir Robert Constable, who knew that Cromwell was still in the king's councils, that one of the king's ships had been seized at Scarborough since the conclusion of the truce, that Suffolk had designs on Hull, and that Derby's royalist army was not tranquil in Lancashire, dissuaded another meeting with the king's commissioners, and urged that if the country were made sure from the Trent northwards, Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire would join the pilgrimage. But more peaceable counsels prevailed. After a debate which seems to have traversed the whole surface of the recent policy, it was agreed to hold a conference at Doncaster, and meantime to cause the archbishop to summon an assemblage of divines to draft the religious grievances of the north.

The news of the York assembly came as an unpleasant surprise to Henry. He had been led to believe that the nobility and gentry of the north had been unwillingly coerced into the movement; he now learnt that they proposed to treat on equal terms with his emissaries and to prescribe conditions for his acceptance. His indignation mounted at the discovery. He instructed Norfolk to use all means to discredit "that villain Aske," with Latimer and the other nobles, while Suffolk was charged to practise with the merchants and inhabitants of Hull for the surrender of the town, and Derby was ordered to put his force in readiness to move at an hour's warning.

It was in an atmosphere hot with a sense of impending conflict that the leaders of the pilgrimage met together at Pomfret on December 2—the divines in the abbey, the nobles, gentry,

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and representatives of the commons in the castle—to concert the catalogue of their demands. As each article was agreed to, *fiat* was written at the head, and then the document was taken out into the open air and declared to the commons. The charge of vagueness which the king had levelled with some justice at the former articles could not hold against the precise and comprehensive requisitory which was carried into Doncaster by the delegates of the Pomfret assembly.[1] Heretical books by named authors, including not only Huss, Luther, and Melancthon, but Tyndale, Barnes, and St. Germain were to be destroyed. The supremacy of the Church touching the cure of souls was to be restored to Rome. Old customs were to be brought back to the liberties, such as Durham, Beverley, and Ripon. The Lady Mary was to be made legitimate; the abbeys were to be restored; the treason law, the statute of uses, the act giving the king power to devise the crown by will, the acts against crossbows and hand-guns were to be repealed. It was desired that all heretics, bishops or otherwise, should have condign punishment by fine or else try issues with the petitioners; that Layton and Leigh should atone for their extortions and other abominable acts, and that Cromwell, Audeley, and Rich should be punished as "subverters of the good laws of the realm and sustainers and inventors of heretics". The statutes against enclosures should be enforced, and the fifteenth remitted.

In a curious memorandum submitted to the Pomfret assembly it was argued, that the parliament which decreed the dissolution of the monasteries was of no authority because the knights and burgesses had been named by the crown and had not been freely elected.[2] Others seem to have contended that the acts of the reformation parliament were vitiated by the fact that non-residents were returned for the boroughs, that the majority of the commons' house were the king's servants, and that the vacancies caused by the death of knights and burgesses during parliament had been immediately filled up. A plea for the reformation of parliamentary elections was accordingly inserted in the articles, and it was made an essential condition that a parliament should meet as soon as possible at Nottingham or at York. The first duty of that assembly would be to pass an

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xi., 1246. [2] *Ibid.*, xi., 1244.

act of indemnity for all that had been done during the commotion. It would proceed to ratify the arrangement as to "gressums" which had recently been made between lords and tenants in Westmorland and Cumberland; and after that it could, presumably, be invited to reverse all the legislation of the last seven years. CHAP. XV.

The programme was sweeping and it was backed by a force of nearly 40,000 armed men. Reading the signals from London, Chapuys thought that the moment was propitious for foreign intervention; but he had made no allowance for the deep-rooted royalism of the north. When Aske met Norfolk in the White Friars at Doncaster on December 5, he and his friends dropped on their knees and petitioned for the king's free pardon before they began to discuss the articles. Norfolk, who found his opponents too loyal to be divided by treachery and too strong to be overcome by arms, promised a parliament and a free pardon under the king's seal. The pardon was proclaimed at Pomfret and, with the aid of Aske's persuasions, gratefully accepted. A gleam of confidence succeeded the angry storm of mistrust. Returning to Doncaster, Aske tore off his cross and the badge of the five wounds in Norfolk's presence. "We will wear no badge nor sign save the badge of our sovereign lord," cried his followers, as they too stripped the emblems from their coats. For the second time the pilgrimage dispersed without the faintest assurance that its purpose would even partially be attained.

The king, in whom good faith was not an article of honour, viewed the capitulation of Doncaster as a blot upon his scutcheon. To grant a free pardon and a free parliament at the call of armed rebels, who disputed his policy and challenged his prerogative, was a confession of weakness which extreme necessity might justify, but which the workings of a punctilious conscience might be trusted to repair. Meanwhile, since Norfolk had pledged him to narcotics, it was well that the medicine should be effectual. With rare penetration Henry resolved to win Aske at a personal interview. He summoned him privately to court, drew from him the whole story of the movement, promised him not only that the queen should be shortly crowned and a parliament held in York, but that the elections should be free, and the spirituality at liberty to declare their learning; and sent him back to the north convinced that the king intended to keep his word. Then he cited Darcy and Constable.

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An explosion intervened. The people of the north had been too deeply stirred to relapse at once into the calm of security upon the faith of unsubstantial promises. They were still alert, suspicious, receptive of every rumour and political signal. They began to feel that they had been cheated. They heard that the Archbishop of York had been ordered to collect a tenth or some other payment, contrary to the understanding at Doncaster. Every day, so it was rumoured, ships were bringing ordnance into Hull, every day the fortifications of Scarborough were being strengthened. It was reported that Lord Derby had kept "a great Christmas" at Lathom; it was known that Cromwell was still privy seal. A royal letter had come to the mayor of York commanding him to disarm the commons. Even vulgar minds acting on such indications could detect a perfidious design. "I fear me," said John Hallom, a yeoman who possessed great influence in Yorkswold and Holderness, "the gentlemen will deceive us the commons, and the king's grace intends to perform nothing of our petitions. Wherefore I think best to take Hull and Scarborough ourselves betimes."[1]

This mad design was, despite Aske's vehement efforts, actually proceeded with. There was a Yorkshire landlord named Sir Francis Bigod, a curious compound of pedantry and enthusiasm, whose light and variable nature had for some inscrutable reason suddenly darted from the protestant to the catholic pole. On Wednesday, January 10, 1537, Bigod explained to Hallom in Walton Abbey that the charter of Doncaster was not good, because it did not run in the king's name; that the king's office was to have no cure of souls; and then with the vanity of an author he read to the yeoman a treatise of his own composition, showing what authority belonged to a pope, what to a bishop, and what to a king. Two days later it was arranged that Hallom should take Hull, and Bigod Scarborough. To avoid suspicion they were to slip in on a market day without harness and in several companies.

The enterprise ended in disaster. On the 16th Hallom, whose design had already been betrayed to the mayor, entered Hull with twenty confederates, was recognised, struck down and captured. The siege of Scarborough castle, never vigorously

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xii., i., 201.

conducted, was raised at the approach of Sir Ralph Evers, while on the 19th a force of Holderness men, under the command of Sir Ralph Ellerkar, defeated Bigod's force outside the walls of Beverley. On February 10 Bigod himself fell into the hands of the royalists. That the revolt was so easily extinguished was mainly due to the exertions of Aske, Darcy, Constable, and Ellerkar; that it occurred at all was attributed by Sir William Fairfax, writing to Cromwell, largely to the influence of the clergy. For the north it was a great and unredeemed calamity. Henry could now argue that the pilgrims had broken their pledge, that the promises given at Doncaster were waste paper, and that his hands were free to punish the leaders, the commons, and the Church. Darcy, Aske, and Constable were brought to London and committed to the Tower. It availed them little that they had helped to save the north from a terrible convulsion. Letters showed that they still cherished hopes of a free parliament, and to desire that was "to persist in a traitor's heart". Other charges were brought tending to exhibit undue leniency to misguided men, and from the letters with which they had allayed the suspicions of the commons, evidence was collected of sympathy with rebellion. A conviction was a foregone conclusion, and the results of the trial were anticipated by the seizure of the prisoners' goods to the king's use. On a market day in July Aske was drawn on a hurdle through the city of York, where, as the king remarked to Suffolk, "he was in his greatest and most frantic glory," and hanged in chains. He admitted that, with Darcy and Constable, he was about to send to Flanders for aid and ordnance, and confessed that he had offended God, the king, and the world; but he denied that the northern men were traitors, and affirmed that Cromwell had several times promised him a pardon for his life, "and that at one time he had a token from the king's majesty of pardon for confessing the truth". Constable suffered a like fate at Hull; Darcy was beheaded on Tower Hill. Adam Sedbergh, abbot of Jervaux; Dr. Pickering, a black friar; William Thirsk, quondam abbot of Fountains; Dr. Cockerell, the prior of Gainsborough; Sir Thomas Percy, and Sir Francis Bigod were added to the first batch of victims. Traitors at heart they had never been, but there was not one of them but would have set his hand to Darcy's passionate apostrophe when

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on April 19, he was examined by the lord privy seal at the chancellor's house: "Cromwell, it is thou that art the very original and chief causer of all this rebellion and mischief, and art likewise causer of the apprehension of us that be noble men, and dost daily earnestly travail to bring us to one end and to strike off our heads, and I trust that or thou die, though thou wouldst procure all the noblemen's heads within the realm to be stricken off, yet shall there one head remain that shall strike off thy head".

So with the destruction of the leaders, lay and clerical, zealots and moderates, ended the pilgrimage of grace. The king did not come north; the free parliament was never held; Cromwell still remained at the head of the administration. So far from averting destruction from the monasteries, this movement, in which so many monks and priests had participated, only afforded fresh pretexts for severity. By a forced and unjust construction of the last law of treason, the great houses of Jervaux, Whalley, Barlings, Kirkstead, and Bridlington were dissolved by the attainder of their abbots. The abbot of Furness was forced to sign a deed of surrender, and the most magnificent monastery in Lancashire was dismantled and ruined. Upon the shore of the Solway looking towards Scotland stood the Cistercian abbey of Holm Cultram, a community of twenty-five monks. The abbot Thomas Carter was accused of complicity in the Lincolnshire rebellion and of violating the Cromwellian injunctions. A commission was sent down to the abbey to try the case; the abbot died before the finding, and Gawin Borodaile, his successor, a tool of Cromwell's, surrendered the abbey into the king's hands. The farmers of the suppressed houses were restored, and while "grave, discreet, and learned personages" were despatched to the north "to teach and preach the truth," the Duke of Norfolk with the king's vehement approval proclaimed martial law in the disturbed district. A fresh rising of the Cumberland and Westmorland men in February emphasised the need of strong action.[1]

The royal vengeance was strict and terrible. Seventy-four men were hanged in Carlisle; another batch at Durham; a third

[1] Sir Thomas Wharton's estimate of the property of the Cumberland and Westmorland ringleaders proves that they were poor men (*Letters and Papers*, xii., 498, 641).

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at York. Women stealing out at night to cut down a husband or a brother from the gibbet were prosecuted for interfering with the justice of the king. "You shall in any wise," wrote Henry to his lieutenant, "cause such dreadful execution to be done upon a good number of the inhabitants of every town, village, and hamlet that have offended in this rebellion as well by the hanging of them up in trees as by the quartering of them and the setting of their heads and quarters in every town great and small, as they may be a fearful spectacle to all other hereafter that would practise any like matter." But these hateful instructions were supplemented by measures of a more statesmanlike character. The disturbances of the north had caused special commissions to be appointed even before the outbreak of the pilgrimage, and among the remembrances of Cromwell for June, 1535, is the suggestion of a council of the north.[1] This suggestion was now carried into effect. "That things may be handled substantially so that people may see the good of law and the evil of violence, his majesty has joined with the said duke an honourable council whose advice the duke shall in all things use." The duke and his council were to make progress through the country inquiring into "the spoils and other enormities" committed since the king's pardon, and when the land was at peace to sit twice a week "to determine causes of common justice".[2]

Norfolk returned to London in September, 1537, but the council of the north remained, an abiding symbol of royal authority, under the presidency of Tunstall, Bishop of Durham. Its functions embraced every sphere of governmental activity. It supervised the collection of revenue; it was responsible for the upkeep of fortresses and the supply of ordnance; it administered justice; it carried out the work of dismantling the condemned monasteries. In case of need the president was authorised to levy armed men. It was a body devised not for show but for hard work, a plain middle-class committee consisting of a bishop, four knights, and seven gentlemen; and it was to a committee so composed, deriving regular salaries from the crown and holding regular communication with the government in London, that the rule of Cumberland, Westmorland,

[1] *Letters and Papers*, viii., 892; *cf.* also viii., 515; xi., 1363.

[2] *Ibid.*, xii., 98.

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Northumberland, Durham, and Yorkshire was now entrusted. At an annual cost estimated at £1,200, Henry and Cromwell had established the machinery of an orderly and effective government of the north.

The year which witnessed the suppression of the northern revolt was marked by the appearance of two books, one of temporary, and the other of lasting importance in the history of the English Church. The *Institution of a Christian Man* was a statement of Anglican dogma, reached after discussions which occupied the bishops and divines from February till the middle of July, 1537. In this treatise, commonly known as the Bishops' book, the four sacraments, which had been left unnoticed in the Ten Articles, were "found again" and made the subject of formal exposition. Justification was declared to be due entirely to the merits of Christ, but did not dispense from the obligation to good works; and while purgatory was repudiated, prayers for departed souls were recommended as laudable. The treatise was submitted to the king, who informed the bishops that not having time fully to examine it, but trusting to their wisdom, he was willing that it should be read on Sundays and holy days for the next three years. It was in fact calculated to soothe some apprehension which had been raised by the omissions from the first Anglican formulary.

The authorisation of an English Bible is an event of far deeper significance than the judicious compromise of the Bishops' book. The England of Henry VIII. was not a religious country, nor was the age of the reformation a religious age; but the English Bible sank into the general consciousness, and gave to a movement which owed much of its original momentum to the material greed of the king and the aristocracy a power of permanent appeal to the whole population. The Bible made the reformation popular and secure, and this not only because it put within the reach of the humblest member of the community a sacred literature of great beauty and richness, but also because it brought into startling light the obscured features of primitive Christianity, the simple structure of the early Church, and the rudimentary precepts which lay at the base of the sacramental system. In the versions of William Tyndale, the word *πρεσβύτης* is translated "elder" instead of "priest"; *ἐκκλησία* "congregation" instead of "church"; *μετανοέω* "repent" instead of

"dospenance"; and these and other renderings, though far more exact than the authorised Latin of the Vulgate, were revolutionary just because they were divested of the associations with which the Latin terms had been clothed by the subsequent accretions of catholic tradition. The translation of the Bible executed by Miles Coverdale, and published in October, 1535, with a dedication to Henry VIII., was not, like Tyndale's Bible, a work of valuable and original scholarship. Tyndale went to the Greek and the Hebrew; Coverdale drew from the Vulgate and Luther. But though it was the first English printed Bible to receive authorisation in England, Coverdale's version, imperfect and unscholarly, did not hold its ground. By a singular revenge of fortune the work of the heretic, Tyndale, whose expressed aim had been to make every peasant as wise as the greatest divine, was received under a disguise into the country which had expelled him and burnt his works. In August, 1537, Cranmer was reading with enthusiasm a new Bible, preferable in his opinion to any other translation and deserving to be licensed for general use. The work appeared, sold with authority by Richard Grafton, and accompanied by a dedication to the king from one Thomas Matthew, probably a pseudonym for John Rogers, the protestant martyr of Mary's reign. The version was not original. The earlier books of the Old Testament and the whole of the New Testament were derived from Tyndale; the rest with some corrections and alterations from Coverdale. In 1538 this version was ordered to be supplied to the churches. — CHAP. XV.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE FALL OF CROMWELL.

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THE course of the pilgrimage of grace was watched with no indifferent eyes by the wardens of catholic orthodoxy on the continent; but the difficulty lay in devising an effective channel for the current of sympathy. Charles, still involved in his war with France, and holding that all popular movements were necessarily short-lived, was unwilling to offend Henry on the doubtful chance of a successful revolution in England; nor was his rival, the libertine ally of the Turk, so imprudent as to provoke a second enemy into the field for the sake of the Church. It was the duty of the pope to be less circumspect in so grave a matter, and at the beginning of 1537 Paul III. determined to despatch a *legatus a latere* to Flanders to encourage the catholic insurgents and to recall Henry to the true fold.

His choice fell upon Reginald Pole, third son of the Countess of Salisbury and grandson of George Duke of Clarence; nor could any selection have been made at once more brilliant or more deplorable. Pole was handsome, charming, learned, devout, a member of a great English house, and bound to Henry by many ties of gratitude and friendship. As a youth he had studied under Linacre and William Latimer at Oxford; and then with Henry's permission, and liberally subsidised from Henry's purse, he had spent five fruitful years in Italy, forming friendships with the leaders of humanism, deepening his own knowledge of the ancient languages, and winning the love of many kinds of men by his spontaneity, his wit, his elegant bearing, his zeal for knowledge, and a certain steady elevation of character. He returned to England at the age of twenty-seven to find the cloud of the divorce question creeping over the sky. The king, whose early piety, love of justice, and encourage-

ment of talent, he never ceased warmly to acknowledge, had fallen a victim to concupiscence. The atmosphere was uncongenial to him, and after a spell of quiet work in the monastery of Sheen, Pole asked and obtained permission to continue his studies in Paris. He was pursued by a command to collect from the university opinions favourable to the divorce; and since to collect opinions was one thing and to adopt them was another, he contrived, with the assistance of Fox, to satisfy his patron. CHAP. XVI.

On his return he was confronted by a more formidable perplexity. He was required to declare his views upon the king's secret matter, and was given to understand that, should they be of the right complexion, he might, though still a layman, receive the bishopric of Winchester or the archbishopric of York. His family, his friends, in particular the Duke of Norfolk, earnestly pressed him to take this comfortable course, and in a moment of weakness Pole believed himself to have discovered a mean between his conscience and the king. The news was transmitted to Henry, who was anxious for the support of so brilliant a disciple, and an interview was accorded at York Place. According to Pole's own account, the sight of his beloved master suddenly turned his purpose. He could not betray him; the image of the peril and disgrace into which Henry was drifting rose clear before his mind; and throwing compromise to the wind, he implored him to save his soul from destruction. The king put his hand to his dagger, and mastered his first passionate impulse to stab the critic. Pole retired, but later submitted a written statement of his views. Henry read the paper, recognised its sincerity, but trusted that the writer would see fit to change his opinions. Meanwhile parliament began its assault on the Church, and Pole, seeing with dismay the growing ascendency of Cromwell, petitioned that he might resume his studies abroad. If Chapuys may be trusted, he told Henry that if he stayed longer in England he must attend parliament, and that, if the divorce were discussed, he must speak according to his conscience. With a generosity not unmingled with prudence Henry gave him his liberty and continued his pension.

A tranquil life was now open to him, should he choose to spend it in pleasant converse with learned friends in Venice or Padua, or at the favourite summer station of Rovelone in

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the Euganean hills. But Pole was alike too prominent and too large-hearted to be extinguished in scholarly meditations. In April, 1535, he received a mandate from the king to say whether the supremacy of the pope and marriage with the widow of a deceased brother were authorised by Scripture. On these points he was charged to give his opinion, "true, plain, without colour or cloak of dissimulation," not in "a great volume in a book, but the most effectual reasons plainly set forth". Pole understood what he was required to do, and the entreaties of his friends at home showed him the importance of doing it; but all hesitation was effaced by the news of the catholic martyrdoms which was brought to him in the course of the summer. The finger of God, he said, appeared to be visible in the blood of such men. To a patriotic Englishman and a convinced papalist it seemed to be mere folly to rescue Africa from the infidel while England was lost to the faith; and Pole set himself down to write, not a short answer to definite questions, but a passionate denunciation of the crimes of the English government.

The *De Unitate Ecclesiæ* was despatched with a covering letter to Tunstall on May 27, 1536. It is unsparing in its invective, loaded with threats, urgent in its concluding appeal to penance. Henry, who had been compared to Nero and Domitian, concealed his indignation, stated that he was not displeased, and invited Pole to England. Pole prudently declined. "If God," he wrote to Tunstall, "would give his grace to taste but one tear of pure penance . . . all the pleasure and comfort that ever I had from childhood or the whole world could give, were not to be compared with the sweetness thereof."[1] But no tear of penance glistened on the royal cheek; rather as news came to England that the author of this audacious treatise had been summoned to Rome, it glowed with fresh indignation. At Verona Pole opened letters from his mother, his elder brother, from Cromwell and from Tunstall, threatening him with dreadful consequences if he pursued his journey. He happened to be travelling with his friend Caraffa, Archbishop of Chieti, afterwards Paul IV., and with Giberti, Bishop of Verona. His agonies of perplexity were overcome by their pious persuasions, and he learnt that to disregard the threats of a king and the

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xi., 210.

love of a mother would redound to the glory of God. In November, 1536, he was in Rome, sumptuously lodged in the Vatican. On December 22 he received the purple. On February 9, 1537, he was created *legatus a latere* and despatched northwards to hold out a hand to the catholic insurgents in England.

If a legate had landed in Yorkshire in the previous October his name and office as the bearer of the papal censures might have given to the slow and uncertain counsels of the catholic lords just that degree of momentum which was wanting to convert an armed demonstration of opinion into a formidable crusade. But autumn and winter passed; the pilgrimage was crushed and the leaders taken before the papal legate left Rome. Pole's expedition only served to exhibit the impotence of the papacy, and the strength and watchfulness of the English government. The King of France ordered him out of his kingdom; the Regent of the Netherlands refused to allow him into her territory. His life was in danger from spies and cut-throats. At Brussels and at Paris English agents were loudly protesting that he should be extradited as a traitor. After a month spent at Cambray, in some peril and no little ignominy, the legate was conveyed under an escort, like some plague-stricken person, into the territory of the Archbishop of Liége. Thence fleeing in August by an unaccustomed route, he returned to Italy with the discredit which attaches to a futile and unaccomplished mission. It was a great triumph for Henry, an extraordinary humiliation for the pope, a proof of the weakness of the religious principle in the scheme of European politics. The phlegmatic Charles congratulated the government at Brussels on its discreet operations. So valuable was the friendship of the British Nero to the head of the holy Roman empire.

A greater triumph was to follow. On the vigil of St. Edward, October 12, 1537, Queen Jane presented the king with a son. The appearance of an heir to the throne, so long vainly desired, and now coming just after the suppression of the northern troubles, was the most effectual answer which could be given to those who saw in the Princess Mary God's instrument for the reversal of an impious policy. For the first time the chances of the dynasty seemed reasonably secure; but grief came hard upon the heels of rejoicing. Twelve days after the birth of

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Prince Edward Henry was a widower, whose hand was again free to be bestowed in marriage, and consequently an urgent matter for diplomatic discussion.

The improvement in the situation at home was balanced by disquieting news from abroad. The war between Francis and Charles was steadily dying down, and a three months' truce, concluded in November, 1537, seemed suspiciously ominous of peace. It was the object of Henry's diplomacy to play upon the jealousies of the two sovereigns and to keep them perpetually embroiled while he pursued his own masterly and lucrative ways at home. With this end in view two sets of marriage negotiations were independently pursued at the Spanish and the French courts. The negotiations with Charles centred round a project of a double marriage alliance between Henry and Christina, Duchess of Milan, and Mary and Don Loys, the Infante of Portugal. Christina was the daughter of Isabella, the sister of Charles V., who had married Christian II., the deposed King of Denmark. She was described as a virgin widow, sixteen years old, "very tall, of competent beauty, soft of speech, and gentle of countenance," and a picture of her was executed by Holbein at a three hours' sitting to recommend her charms to the English court. The other alliance was more open to question. Mary was half a Spaniard, and Charles calculated that if his cousin were married to the Infante of Portugal and he bestowed upon them the Duchy of Milan, England would be involved in the defence of that disputed province. To accept the proposals which came from Charles without modification would have necessitated a closer and more perilous understanding than Henry cared for, and he imported into the discussion of the project some topics which were calculated to impede the smooth progress of the negotiations; he demanded of Charles a pledge that he would not recognise the council of the Church which the pope had summoned to meet at Mantua, and instructed his agents to haggle over the terms of the Portuguese match.

Meanwhile he affected to survey the matrimonial supplies of France. Informed that a match had been made between Mary of Guise and James V. of Scotland, Henry declared that nothing would please him better than a union with that remarkable lady. But if it was a classic device to sow ill-will between Paris and Edinburgh, it was one which no great exercise of perspicacity

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was required to defeat. Francis caused Henry to be informed that the lady's hand was already bestowed on his nephew, and to the chagrin of her ambitious mother, ordered the Scottish match to proceed. Unabashed Henry resumed his gallant quest. Could not a train of French beauties be sent to Calais, or some such spot, where the eye of the intending bridegroom could conveniently inspect them? It was objected that French ladies were not to be trotted out like hackneys, and Henry was recommended to send trustworthy persons to report upon the resources of the French court. "By God," said the king, "I trust no one but myself. The thing touches me too near. I wish to see them and know them some time before deciding."[1] But meanwhile events had occurred which emptied these dealings of serious significance. In June, 1538, a ten years' truce was arranged at Nice between Charles and Francis through the mediation of the pope; and in July the understanding was confirmed by a personal meeting of the two sovereigns at Aigues-Mortes. That which Henry had particularly feared was now an accomplished fact. The great dispute was settled, and settled without his proffered mediation, nor was there any political advantage to be derived from a marriage which did not break the new-made understanding. "I am resolved," said Henry to Chatillon, "not to marry unless the emperor or the king my brother prefer my friendship to that which they have together."[2] The amity of Aigues-Mortes founded on the mutual exhaustion of the combatants was not a very solid block of diplomatic masonry; but it was somewhat exorbitant to expect that it should tumble to the ground at the first blast of Henry's matrimonial horn. The talk of the marriages grew fainter and fainter until the whole plan faded into oblivion.

While the triple union of Nice had created an international situation of extreme delicacy and peril, Henry, with little care for possible consequences and reckless of the fires of catholic indignation, embarked on a course which was calculated to wound the susceptibilities of the Latin world in a most tender place. The greater monasteries were one by one falling into the king's hands by way of surrender, a process considerably quickened by a new visitation conducted by Leigh and Layton

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xiii., 2, 77. [2] *Ibid.*

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in January, 1538; and a vigorous campaign was prosecuted against the friaries. But more impressive than the confiscation and rapid downfall of the monastic system, was the methodical and organised destruction of relics, images, and shrines, the blood of Hailes, the rood of Boxley, the angel of Caversham, the image of our Lady of Walsingham, the famous and splendid shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury. The war against the toys and emblems of popular superstition was conducted with the rollicking and contemptuous iconoclasm of which Cromwell was a master. The rood of Boxley, discovered to be a miserable mechanism of wood and wire, was exposed in the market-place at Maidstone and made the butt of a satirical sermon at St. Paul's. A special commission sat upon the blood of Hailes and stripped it of its slender credentials to respect. ' It was reported from North Wales that a rude and ancient wooden image named Darvell Gardarn was believed to have the power of recalling lost souls from hell, and was in consequence the bourne of pilgrimages and the recipient of a copious but rustic tribute. The uncouth idol was hauled to London, and with an intention too obvious to elude the gaping crowds of Smithfield, even if it had not been advertised in verse upon the gallows, was burnt beneath the suffering form of a catholic martyr.

But a special significance underlay the destruction of Becket's shrine at Canterbury. All over the catholic world St. Thomas was regarded as the martyr of the liberties of the Church, and as the victim of an impious king who had transgressed the frontier of secular authority. The martyrdom of Becket, blazoned on many a painted window, was a perpetual reminder of the sacred cause of ecclesiastical exemption; the shrine of Becket, reputed to be the richest in Europe, attracted crowds of pilgrims drawn from every country and clime. The cause thus commemorated and sustained in popular sentiment was the cause which Henry's government was now combating; and with a true but ruthless instinct it determined to uproot a dangerous sentiment by destroying the emblem which was most effectual in preserving it. Becket was declared to be "a rebel who fled the realm to France and to the Bishop of Rome to procure the abrogation of wholesome laws". His pictures were ordered to be plucked down, his festival to be discontinued, his services to be erased from the books; and while the precious shrine at Canterbury

was stripped of its jewels and its gold, the bones and relics of the saint were ignominiously burnt.[1] CHAP. XVI.

When the outrage was announced to the college of cardinals on October 25, 1538, it filled them with ire, and consternation. What adequate punishment could be inflicted upon a man who thus heaped impiety on impiety? A committee of cardinals was appointed to explore possibilities and to suggest a plan of campaign which might have some chance of success. It was decided, doubtless upon their recommendation, that the papacy should urge Charles and Francis, if not to invade England, at least by a suspension of commerce to cause the heretical king serious inconvenience. A bull against Henry had been drafted in August, 1535, but suspended by advice of the powers and in hopes of the king's amendment. The execution of this bull was now, on December 17, 1538, commanded on the ground that Henry so far from profiting by the leniency of the curia had proceeded to further excesses, that he had dug up and burned the bones of St. Thomas of Canterbury, scattered his ashes to the winds, and despoiled his shrine. It was hoped that force might support piety. Pole was sent to Toledo to urge Charles to make a truce with the Turk and to recover England for the true religion; and a papal envoy was despatched to Scotland with the biretta and cap for Beaton, the new Scottish cardinal, and with a commission to urge French and Scots alike to publish the bull, to prohibit commerce and intelligence with England, and to wage war against the Bible corruptly translated into the English tongue. At the close of the year it was a question whether the course of Henry's domestic policy would not be violently interrupted by the action of France, Scotland, and the empire acting under the guidance and inspiration of the pope.

The counterstroke to these machinations was a sudden and terrible blow aimed at the family and friends of Cardinal Pole. At the end of August Sir Geoffrey Pole, the cardinal's younger brother, a man who had repeatedly urged upon Chapuys that a foreign conquest of England was greatly desired by the people, and easy of accomplishment, was cast into the Tower, and then after his spirit had been broken by nearly two months of con-

[1] Mr. H. S. Milman contends, but does not prove, that the bones of St. Thomas were hidden and not burnt (*Archæologia*, liii. [1892], 211 *sqq.*).

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finement, was subjected to rigorous examination. From the lips of this miserable creature evidence was elicited sufficient to implicate his elder brother, Lord Montague, the Marquis of Exeter, Lord Delawarr, Sir Edward Neville, and some of the canons of Chichester. Delawarr, against whom nothing more criminal could be discovered than some expressions derogatory to the statute of uses, was released upon recognisances; but Exeter and the Poles were designed for destruction.

For this there were many reasons which commended themselves to Henry and Cromwell. Royal blood ran in the veins both of the Poles and the Courtenays; for while Montague was the grandson of George Duke of Clarence, Henry Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter, was through his mother, Catharine, the grandson of Edward IV., and the heir to the English crown should Henry die without lawful issue. Should a foreign invasion ever come to pass, these would be the men whose claims would be advanced by the friends of the enemy. All pretendants were naturally suspect to Henry, and there was reason to suppose that the disaffection of this particular circle was deep and inveterate. Montague was the son-in-law of George Neville Lord Abergavenny, who had once been placed under arrest on suspicion of treason, and was himself the son-in-law of the Duke of Buckingham who perished on the scaffold in 1521. The Marchioness of Exeter had been one of those who had believed in the pretensions of the Nun of Kent. Her husband had for a short time in 1531 been placed under arrest, upon suspicion of a design to usurp the throne;[1] and though the charges which were then advanced dissolved themselves into the idle chatter of some Cornish retainers, desirous that their master "should wear the garland," they were sufficient to exhibit the hopes and aspirations which clustered round the White Rose. In Cornwall and Devon the influence of the Courtenays was paramount, and evidence came to the government in April, 1537, which showed that the spirit of disaffection was abroad in this quarter.[2] That the Marquis of Exeter stood for the old order was well established. "If my lord knew any of his

[1] *Letters and Papers*, v., 416; xiii., 2, 961; *Archæologia*, ii., 20-25; *Letters and Papers*, xiv., 1, 532; Ellis, *Original Letters*, 1st Ser., ii., 104, wrongly, it would seem, ascribed to 1539.

[2] *Letters and Papers*, xii., 1, 1001; xiii., 2, 1134.

servants," said the yeoman of his horse, "to have any of these books in English, or to read any of the same, they should never do him any longer service." That he had intrigued with Chapuys was a deadly fact, which the government might suspect, but could not prove; but it came out that he was in close communication with Montague, and that he had said to Sir Geoffrey Pole, "Knaves rule about the king. I trust to give them a buffet one day." Less evidence than this was sufficient to secure a conviction in a Tudor court. CHAP. XVI.

The case against Lord Montague and Sir Geoffrey Pole rested mainly upon the allegation that they had corresponded with their brother the cardinal, had warned him against assassination, and had consequently helped to prevent his coming to England. Fragments of conversation were also brought up in evidence, tending to show that they denounced the dissolution of the monasteries, sympathised with the objects of the pilgrimage of grace, and still cherished the forbidden doctrine of the papal supremacy. Against the younger brother the evidence was weighty. It was shown that letters were burned under suspicious circumstances, both in his house and at Lord Montague's; that he had sent a certain Hugh Holland across the sea with a message to the cardinal, and that he had more than once meditated an escape to the continent. Montague was satisfactorily but less easily implicated. Knowing the perils in which the pronounced action of the cardinal had involved him, he had been peculiarly careful to avoid offence. He had urged Reginald to come to England, denounced him for his project of visiting Rome, implored him to decline the purple. He had instructed Holland on no account to facilitate Sir Geoffrey's flight across the seas. So anxious was he to stand well with the government, that Sir Geoffrey once asserted that Lord Montague was out of his mind and would reveal the cardinal's messages to Cromwell. Fragments of compromising talk were, however, reported. "The king will one day die suddenly; his leg will kill him and then we shall have jolly stirring"; or "In times past kings' words would be believed". He lamented the plucking down of abbeys; possessed and delighted in the works of Sir Thomas More; and had been heard to grumble at the cowardly surrender of parliament to a policy promoted by heretics and knaves.

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The aged Countess of Salisbury was included in the common disaster of her house. It was in vain that at the command of the privy council she had written letter after letter to exhort, rebuke, and even to disown her second son: in vain that in the presence of her servants she had publicly declared him to be a traitor. Papal bulls of unspecified date were discovered in a room at Cowdray, and even if it had not been asserted that her house was full of obscurantist priests, and that she had forbidden her tenants to possess the New Testament in English, this circumstance would have been sufficient to destroy her. Nothing else could be certainly proved. She strongly denied that she had received messages from Reginald Pole, though she admitted that for motherly pity she could not but rejoice that he had escaped assassination. "We may call her rather a constant man than a woman," wrote the two inquisitors, who had been baffled in their pursuit of compromising avowals.

On Monday, December 9, 1538, Exeter, Montague, and Sir Edward Neville were beheaded on Tower Hill. The indictment against Montague stated that he had said to Sir Geoffrey Pole his brother: "I like well the doings of my brother the cardinal, and I would we were both over the sea, for this world will one day come to strifes"; and, again, "knaves rule about the king—I trust the world will amend and that we shall have a day upon these knaves"; and similar sentiments were ascribed to Exeter and Neville. On the same day Hugh Holland and Dr. Crofts, late chancellor of Chichester, who was accused of having denied the royal supremacy, were hanged and quartered. To Sir Geoffrey, who had turned king's evidence against his kith and kin, there was granted the ignominy of a pardon. His mother was placed in the Tower, from whose grim walls she was neither intended nor destined to be released.

The destruction of the Poles, and possibly also of Exeter, had been long premeditated by the king and was beautifully explained to the foreigners. The French ambassador was informed that the marquis had designed to usurp the kingdom by marrying his son to the princess and by destroying the prince, and that since his execution copies of a correspondence with Cardinal Pole had been discovered in a coffer belonging to the marchioness. The obstinacy of the Lady Mary was attributed to the machinations of the Courtenays; the

emperor's knowledge of Henry's intentions to their treacherous communications with his ambassador in London. The account supplied to the Spanish court was differently contrived, and at once more elaborate and hideous. By the cardinal's counsel Exeter and Montague had plotted to destroy not only the king and the prince, but Mary and Elizabeth as well; and Wyatt was instructed to add that the design had been in Exeter's mind for the past ten years. CHAP. XVI.

During the early months of 1539 a lively apprehension prevailed that through "the crafty cardinality of Raynold Pole" this country would be invaded by France and Spain. A treaty was signed at Toledo on January 12, by which Charles and Francis bound themselves to make no new alliance or accord with England without mutual consent. The negotiations for the hand of the Duchess of Milan were broken off on the pretext that a dispensation was requisite. Papal envoys represented the Roman case to Ferdinand at Vienna; Scotch balladmongers reviled the King of England for his heresies; so high ran the feeling in Brussels that Wriothesley, who had been confident of bringing off the Milanese match, wrote to Cromwell on March 3 that an invasion was spoken of for the summer and that the servants of the duchess dared not come to him but in the "owl's flight," and slunk home "without torches". At Venice it was believed that the two catholic monarchs intended to make the enterprise of England. In Brussels the English crown was assigned to Orleans or to Pole. In London it was reported that an imperial fleet with 10,000 men on board was off the coast of Zealand. What was its destination? It was only known that the foundries at Antwerp were busy with guns, and that an enormous tax had been laid upon the spirituality in the imperial dominions.

In the face of this foreign menace the country showed how little recent events had availed to impair its loyalty and cohesion. The fortresses on the south coast and the Scottish border were rapidly put in a state of defence. Calais, Berwick, and Carlisle were strengthened; new blockhouses, such as Calshot, Camber, and Hurst, were built out of the wealth or the stones of the monasteries. As Marillac travelled from Dover to London at the end of March, he found the countryside alive with musters. Every adult male capable of bearing arms was drilling.

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The king's galleys and ships on the Thames were ready to put out to sea and to join the rest of the fleet at Portsmouth, 150 sail in all. The country was as anxious to repel an invasion prompted by "that most pestilent idol, enemy of all truth and usurpator of princes, the Bishop of Rome," as it had apparently been anxious to reverse the policy of Cromwell.

By May 1 the danger was passed, and in truth the alarm had little foundation. Francis declined to move without Charles, and Charles decided that the affairs of Germany must be settled before he broke with England. Even the pope recognised that unless a truce were concluded with the Turks it would be impossible to do more than break the commercial intercourse with England, and it was an open question in the curia whether the interests of Italy and Christendom, so seriously threatened on the one hand by the Turkish armada, on the other by the Lutheran princes, would not be injured by a diversion of imperial energies to the North. The second mission of Pole failed not less completely than the first; and the adroitness of English diplomacy contributed to the results. News having reached London in January, 1539, that the pope was preparing an attack upon Urbino, and that Ferrara, Mantua, and other Italian states were threatened by his ambition, Henry sent an envoy to the Duke of Urbino to hold out hope of the king's assistance, and "circumspectly to explain the usurpations of the Roman See".[1] The threat of a commercial embargo was met even more skilfully. A proclamation was issued on February 26, that for the next seven years strangers should, save for wools, pay no higher customs or subsidy than the king's subjects. Such a bribe as that was in itself sufficient to win the mercantile community in Flanders, and to appease the hostility of the empire.

Meanwhile parliament had been summoned to meet on April 28. A scheme for the poor people in the realm, a device for fortification, acts of attainder against Exeter and his wife, the Countess of Salisbury, Reginald Pole, and their accomplices, and a plan for unity of religion, such were the themes which appear to have been designed for its consideration. Of this miscellaneous programme far the most important item, since

[1] *State Papers*, viii., 130; *Letters and Papers*, xiv., 1, 104.

the danger of the invasion became fainter and fainter, was the settlement of religion. The reformation parliament had eliminated the papal authority from the Church system; but it had erected no complete standard of doctrine. The Ten Articles were confessedly imperfect and provisional; and the Bishops' book, having been issued without the authority of king, lords, or commons, lacked the sanction which was desired for the settlement of the faith of the national Church. In this state of transition and uncertainty, the parties of the old and new learning were sharpening their weapons for the decisive struggle. Every shrine which was splintered to bits by the hammer of the iconoclast, every monastery which surrendered into the king's hands, every image that was burnt at Smithfield, was hailed as a triumph by the reforming party. An enthusiast wrote to Bullinger that Dagon and Bel were everywhere falling; Latimer broke into indecent exultation over the fall of the Poles. On September 5, 1538, Cromwell issued a second series of injunctions, which appeared to mark a further advance on the pathway of change. A Bible of the largest volume was to be set up in every church, and the clergyman was to admonish his parishioners to read it. The Pater noster, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments were to be publicly recited in English, and taught every Sunday and holiday; sermons were to be preached at least once a quarter; parishioners to be examined in the Articles of Faith and the Lord's Prayer; images "abused with pilgrimages or offerings" to be taken down. Great hopes were entertained, not only in England but among Lutheran circles abroad, that Henry, who sanctioned these reforms, who found the pope and the Catholic powers arrayed against him, whose protest against the general council was read, translated, and republished in Germany, would finally free his Church from the ungodly superstitions of Rome. CHAP. XVI.

Henry never wavered in dogma. The greater the external peril, the more clearly was he resolved to manifest the tenacity of his faith. At the moment when the relations between France and England were most strained he had Francis informed that the King of England must not be reviled as a heretic by Frenchmen; and diplomatic pressure equally urgent and minatory soon quieted the Scottish ballad-mongers. Just before the blow fell upon the house of Pole, the bishops and

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nobles were summoned to London to assist the king in a cause of heresy. The accused man, one John Lambert or Nicholson, was brought under an armed escort into the judgment hall, and confronted with a large and brilliant array of lords spiritual and temporal, lawyers, and gentlemen of the king's privy chamber. The king, clothed all in white, presided over the court, cross-examined the accused, listened to arguments protracted over a space of five hours, and finally bade him recant or be burned. In November of the same year he issued a proclamation establishing a censorship over English books, and declaring that no man should reason or dispute about the sacrament, except "those learned in divinity in their schools". German divines were discussing the basis of a theological union with English bishops for five months during the summer of 1538. They returned to their homes declaring that a union was impossible, unless the English would consent to abandon three heads of papal idolatry, private masses, enforced clerical celibacy, the restriction of the communion in both kinds to the priesthood.

Cromwell promised the king that the parliament would be tractable, and in the annals of England this parliament stands conspicuous for its surrenders to autocracy and persecution. There is enough evidence to show that Cromwell, realising the critical state of affairs, spared no effort to secure the return of men upon whom he could count in a division against those who, like Gardiner, stood for the old faith. He was invited to pick the burgesses for Portsmouth; his nominees were returned for Hampshire and Norfolk. He prescribed one of the knights for Cornwall; his agent, the Earl of Southampton, was informed that in respect of one of the Guildford seats the burgesses would defer to his pleasure. Yet even Wriothesley, whose fortune had been made by the lord privy seal, would throw his benefactor to the wolves at a nod from the king.[1]

One of the first acts of the parliament of 1539 was, in accordance with the king's desire, to appoint an impartial committee composed of the vice-gerent, the two archbishops, and six bishops to examine opinions concerning the Christian religion. The expedient of combining representatives of both

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xiv., 1, 520, 538, 564, 573, 598, 634, 636, 645, 662, 672, 706, 792, 800, 1042.

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schools on a committee was not calculated to accelerate agreement, and before the bishops had reported, a new scheme was launched upon the waters. On May 16 Norfolk came down to the lords, and alluding to the disagreement of the prelates invited the whole house to discuss six articles of religion and to frame a penal statute upon them. The articles raised the fundamental points in debate between catholic and protestant Europe. Was the Eucharist the very body of Christ without Transubstantiation? Did the divine law enjoin the observation of vows of chastity? What was to be thought of private masses, the marriage of priests, auricular confession? The debate which ensued is one of the most memorable in the history of parliament, though no fragment of the speeches has been transmitted to posterity. The cause of the new learning was defended by Cranmer, Latimer, Shaxton, Goodrich, Barlow, and Heath; on the opposite side were ranged Lee, the Archbishop of York, Gardiner Bishop of Winchester, Tunstall of Durham, and Aldrich of Carlisle. Reaction was in the air, and the temporal peers, who listened in silence to the arguments of the divines, were determined by a unanimous vote to curry favour with the king, to avenge themselves on Cromwell, and to exhibit their abhorrence of dogmatic novelty.[1] The conservative proclivities of the royal mind had recently been exhibited in so unmistakable a manner that neither Cromwell nor Audeley dared to join in the discussion. It was observed that on Good Friday his majesty crept to the Cross devoutly from the chapel and served the priest at mass that same day, "his own person kneeling on his grace's knees";[2] it was known that he received holy bread and holy water every Sunday. A sudden access of ceremonial strictness—the hanging of a man in London for eating flesh on Friday—warned the capital against religious levity. Everything bent before the royal will. Henry came down to the upper house, argued against the reformers, and "finally," in the words of a temporal peer who was present, "confounded them all with God's learning".[3]

[1] Burnet, *History of the Reformation*, vi., 233; *Letters and Papers*, xiv., 1, 1040.

[2] *Letters and Papers*, xiv., 2, 967.

[3] Cranmer subsequently asserted that the measure would not have passed if the king had not come personally into the parliament house, and that it was

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The penal act enforcing the principles of the catholic faith stands described in the statute book as an "Act abolishing Diversity of Opinions". Diversity of opinions cannot be abolished by act of parliament, and if the "whip with six strings" was effectual, it was rather because it expressed than because it deflected opinion. In the lower house of convocation there were only two dissentients, a proof that the measure was acceptable to the lower clergy; among the temporal peers there was unanimity. On the question of transubstantiation there was no difference even among the bishops, and the whole upper house of convocation was agreed that private masses might stand with the word of God. The statute alluded to the fact that "the king's most royal majesty had most graciously vouchsafed in his own princely person to descend and come into his high court of parliament and council, and there like a prince of most high prudence and no less learning opened and declared many things of high learning and great knowledge"; and then after expressing thanks to the king for his "godly pain and travail," unfolded its hideous list of penalties. To deny transubstantiation was heresy, punishable by the stake; to preach, teach, or opine against the other five articles was a felony without benefit of clergy. The marriage of priests and professed persons was declared void, and it was made a felony for a priest to keep a woman to whom he had been married or betrothed. Persons declining to receive the sacrament or to confess were liable on the first offence to fine and imprisonment, on the second to death. Finally, commissions were from time to time to be issued to inquire into heresies and to take informations or accusations either by the oath of two witnesses or before a jury.

The parliament which passed this ferocious statute dealt the last blow to the monastic system. An act was passed vesting in the king and his heirs all the monasteries which had been surrendered or forfeited since February 4, 1536, and providing that all monasteries which hereafter should be dissolved or relinquished should be "vested in and deemed to be in the actual seisin of the king". Another statute conferred legal

"against the truth and common judgment both of divines and lawyers" ("Answer to the Fifteen Articles of the Rebels of Devon," *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters*, p. 108).

capacity upon the monks and nuns, who were now released from their vows, and enabled them to purchase land, and to sue and be sued in the ordinary courts. These measures, which in themselves did little more than recognise an existing situation, were flanked by a statute empowering the king to create and endow new sees, to nominate bishops, and to frame rules and statutes for such dioceses as it should please him to erect. In the preamble to this act the dissolution of the monasteries is exhibited as a step rendered necessary by the "slothful and ungodly life of the monks," and designed that "God's word might be better set forth, that children might be brought up to learning, that readers in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin should have good stipend, that daily alms should be ministered, highways mended, and exhibition provided for ministers of the Church". Consoled by the prospect of so golden a harvest, parliament sanctioned without protest the great act of confiscation. Burdened with debt, hampered by vexatious injunctions, terrified by the prospect of attainder, abbey after abbey fell into the king's hands. The fate of the abbots of Reading, Glastonbury, and Colchester, murdered by Cromwell after a hollow trial for their reluctance to comply with the fiscal appetites of the crown, demonstrated the perils of delay; and with the surrender of Waltham abbey on March 23, 1540, the last of the English monasteries dropped into the devouring jaws of the court of augmentations.

More than six weeks after its first introduction, "with great difficulty and long debate, and little pleasure of those who assented to it," parliament passed an act giving to the king's proclamations the force of law. In its original form it is probable that the act was chiefly framed for the purpose of enabling the king to obtain supplies without consent of parliament,[1] but as finally passed it was little more than a supplementary edict against heresy. It was enacted that the king, with the advice of his honourable council, might at all times set forth proclamations under such penalties as to his highness and his council might seem necessary, and that such proclamations should be obeyed as though made by act of parliament; but the power so granted was accompanied by limitations which showed

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xiv., 1, 1207.

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that the constitutional sense of parliament was not entirely destroyed. Save in the case of heresy or under forfeitures expressed in the act, no proclamation should prejudice life, liberty, or property, nor abridge the force of the laws of the land.

Meanwhile an act of attainder had been passed not only against Exeter, Neville, and Montague, who had suffered the penalty of death at the end of the previous year, but against other members of the Pole and Courtenay connexion. Of these the most distinguished was the Countess of Salisbury, and against her alone was it thought expedient to produce some evidence of guilt. On May 12 Cromwell came down to the lords and exhibited a white silk tunic, which had been discovered by the lord admiral among the linen of the countess. It was embroidered in front with the arms of England, three lions in a garland of pansies for Pole and marigolds for Princess Mary, and behind with the symbol of the five wounds which had been emblazoned on the banner of the pilgrimage of grace. "Pole," wrote one to Lady Lisle, "intended to have married my Lady Mary, and betwixt them both should again arise the old doctrine of Christ. This was the intent that the coat was made, as it is openly known in the parliament."[1] Lady Salisbury languished in the Tower for two years and was then executed; nor was her body permitted to rest in the beautiful tomb which the chisel of Torregiano had carved for her at Christchurch, and which the hammer of Cromwell's agents senselessly defaced. More fortunate the Marchioness of Exeter anticipated the sentence of the law by a natural death; but thirteen persons, including five priests and a friar, were added to the victims of the catholic faith by the parliament which passed the act of the Six Articles to defend it.

The public mind, which had been alarmed by the prospect of a radical change in the creed, derived comfort from the reflection that the faith was now securely guarded against the heretic. "The people," wrote Marillac in June, 1539, "show great joy at the king's declaration concerning the sacrament, being much more inclined to the old religion than to the new opinions"; and in the "whip with the six strings" the crowd, who jested at the "new-fangled fellows," the new Pater noster,

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xiv., 1, 980.

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the new Pharisees, and the new learning, saw with glee the approaching end of the Cromwellian domination. That Shaxton and Latimer, who refused to subscribe the act, were compelled to resign their sees emphasised the triumph of a reaction, which among the sorrowing protestants of Germany was attributed to the dark machinations of Gardiner. At home and abroad the party of the Gospel was thrown into great consternation. Melancthon wrote to Henry a solemn letter of expostulation, and appealed to him to reverse a decree which the sophistries of wicked bishops had induced him to sanction: Bucer predicted that the act would empty England of all its qualified ministers. Yet, though the new confession of faith placed a bar in the way of understanding between Henry and the Lutherans, the pope had no reason for exultation. "There is not a village feast or pastime anywhere," wrote Marillac on July 13, "in which something is not inserted in derision of the Holy Father."[1]

The storm which blew down Cromwell was gathered in Germany. In the spring of the year, when it seemed likely that a catholic crusade would be launched against England, he propounded a scheme for a marriage between his master and the sister of Duke William of Cleves. Such an alliance was calculated to touch Charles in a sore spot, and to forge links between England and the league of Smalcalde. By the death of Duke Charles of Guelderland in June, 1539, his duchy, which the diplomacy of France had forged into a perennial instrument of torture to the empire, passed into the hands of the Duke of Cleves. The prince, who was neither a Lutheran in theology nor a papalist in Church government, but, like Henry, an orthodox Erastian, was by force of circumstances driven into the Lutheran camp. His acceptance of Guelders was a mortal affront to the empire; his sister Sibylla was married to John Frederick of Saxony, and it was through the Saxon court that he received the first overtures from England.

There were always three obstacles fatal to a satisfactory union between England and the Lutheran league; the rigid orthodoxy of the English king, the fact that the strength of the German princes was as yet uncertain and untried, and the superior sense

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xiv., 1, 1261.

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of security offered by an alliance either with the emperor or with France. An understanding with the protestant courts had hitherto been viewed neither as involving a breach with Charles nor as interrupting the negotiations for a French or imperial marriage, nor again as affording a pretext for relaxing the attempt to break the cohesion of the amity of Aigues-Mortes. Still less did it involve a capitulation to the Saxon theology. It was defensive, supplemental, a *pis-aller*, a demonstration that England was not friendless on the continent, an invitation to one or other of the two great powers to claim her friendship. The union of Henry with a princess of Cleves implied a more definite and permanent position. It was more than a strain on the neutrality of the empire. It was a challenge and defiance.

The alarm of invasion passed away; the arrival of Marillac bred hopes of conciliating the French; the act of the Six Articles cooled the friendship of the Lutherans; at the diet of Frankfort the Smalcaldic league made a truce with the empire. The Cleves alliance, which seemed certain at the end of March, was doubtful at the end of May, improbable at the end of June, and would in any case have been broken by a serious matrimonial overture from France. That overture was never made. On the contrary the autumn showed Charles and Francis more closely knit than ever; and the news that the emperor was to travel through France to put down a rebellion in Ghent quickened the wheels of diplomacy at Düsseldorf, and gave to the Cleves alliance an air of political expediency in London. On October 4, a marriage treaty was signed at Hampton Court between Henry and Anne, the elder sister of William of Cleves. To Marillac Henry explained that he was animated by four motives in concluding the alliance. He desired to win the friendship of Saxony and the Smalcaldic league; he wished to gain prompt assistance if he were attacked; he believed that by the intercession of Cleves he might soften many harsh innovations and compose many religious differences in Germany; while, lastly, having but one male child, he hoped to establish the succession by still further issue.

Henry must have known that his new bride was thirty-four years of age. He had been informed that she had been brought up at her mother's elbow, that she occupied her time mostly with the needle, that she had no French, Latin, or other language,

and that she could not sing a note nor play on an instrument. CHAP. XVI.
He could form some estimate of her appearance from a portrait executed by Holbein, though the artist doubtless erred on the side of flattery. Nevertheless he was led to believe that the lady was both clever and beautiful. "Every man," wrote Cromwell, on March 18, "praiseth the beauty of the same lady as well for the face as for the whole body above all other ladies excellent. One among other purposes that she excelleth the Duchess of Milan as the golden sun excelleth the silver moon."[1] The disillusionment was instantaneous. Anne was a plain, heavy woman, who had lost the first bloom of youth and had never been schooled to any grace or accomplishment. "She is not so young," wrote Marillac, "as was expected nor so beautiful as every one affirmed." The king, who rode out to Rochester to greet the bride on new year's day, "busied not to speak with her twenty words," and opened out his disappointment to Sir Anthony Browne and to Cromwell. "How say you, my lord? Is it not as I told you? Say what they will, she is nothing so fair as has been reported." The council was convoked to contrive a means of escape. Henry had already been informed that Anne had in her father's time been espoused to the young Duke of Lorraine, but he was assured that there was no precontract and that the espousals had been revoked. There was just a desperate chance that these assurances could not be substantiated, but the air of conviction in the Cleves' agents dispelled it. "Is there no remedy," cried the king, "but I must needs against my will put my neck in the yoke?" His councillors could contrive nothing. On January 6, 1540, the unwilling bridegroom went through the ceremony of marriage with the lady whom he likened to "a Flanders mare". "Surely, my lord," he remarked to Cromwell on the following day, "I liked her before not well, but now I like her much worse."

This was ominous news for the vice-gerent; and the next few months witnessed a struggle for ascendency in the council between the party of Cromwell and Gardiner, of which we can dimly descry the abrupt and thrilling vicissitudes. At first Gardiner is under a cloud, removed, it is said, from the council for calling Dr. Barnes a heretic; then at the beginning of Lent his star emerges. He thunders against the Lutheran doctrine from the

[1] *State Papers*, i., 604; *Letters and Papers*, xiv., 1, 552.

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pulpit of St. Paul's. Barnes retaliates; two other "hot gospellers," Jerome and Garrard, join in the fray with denunciation of the Six Articles and "the butterflies, fools, and knaves of the parliament house". The balance seems again to incline against the catholic leader. Two Saxon ambassadors wrote to the diet of Smalcalde on March 7 to say that Cromwell, who was the real king of England, had prevented the execution of the act of Six Articles, that he was inclined to the gospel, and that the king at a personal interview had expressed his desire for a religious and political understanding with the league.[1] But meanwhile the noise of the preachers had arrested the king's attention. He is deeply interested, summons the rivals to dispute before him, sides with Gardiner, extracts recantations from the Lutherans, and then at the beginning of April sends the three preachers to the Tower, with ten or twelve London burgesses and fifteen or twenty strangers suspected of anabaptism. The prophets, arguing from "the charitable dexterity" with which his majesty confounds the heretic, believe that Cromwell is tottering to his fall and already begin to distribute his offices. "If he remains," writes Marillac, on April 10, "in his former credit and authority, it will only be because he is very assiduous in affairs . . . and does nothing without consulting the king."

It was at this juncture that parliament reassembled. If Wolsey shone in diplomacy, Cromwell's chief distinction lay in the management of parliaments. His aid was indispensable in the drafting of measures, the piloting of bills, the extracting of supplies. To the confusion of his enemies, who expected that the first act of parliament would be to send him to the scaffold, the lord privy seal was heaped with new honours. On April 17, he was made Earl of Essex; on the following day he received the office of lord chamberlain; while at the same time Sadler and Wriothesley, who had been his close associates, were made secretaries to the king. On the 24th Marillac wrote that he was in as much credit with his master as ever. Nor is the revival of his influence a matter of wonder. He confiscated the revenues of the knights of St. John, drew a subsidy of four shillings in the pound from the clergy, and four fifteenths and two subsidies from the temporality, and all with such rigour and

[1] Winckelmann, *Politische Correspondenz der Stadt Strassburg*, iii., 33.

expedition that before the Whitsuntide holiday the king, according to one calculation, was enabled to pocket £3,000,000.

Then as his utility exhausted itself, the storm burst upon him. At the beginning of parliament two committees had been appointed to report respectively upon ceremonies and doctrine. That the contest both here and in the council was passionate and internecine is evident from the fact that every advantage gained by one side or the other was signalised by the addition of a fresh batch to the prisoners already awaiting their doom in the Tower. On May 19 Lord Lisle was arrested on the charge of having designed the betrayal of Calais to Cardinal Pole. A little later Bishop Sampson of Chichester and Wilson, a royal chaplain, were imprisoned as papalists. The panic among the bishops was great; and perhaps was increased by the terms of a new treason bill introduced into the lords on May 29. A trustworthy person told Marillac that he had heard from Cromwell that there were five bishops who should be treated as Chichester had been treated; and for the moment Cromwell seemed likely to accomplish his purpose. Sampson, Gardiner's chief friend, was down; Cranmer was appointed in his place to be preacher and reader in St. Paul's; on June 1 the peers unanimously voted the attainder of Featherstone, Abell, and Powell for denying the king's supremacy. It was even rumoured that Barnes was to be released and Latimer to be recalled. "Such was the inconstancy of the English!" With a lack of courage to be excused by the vehemence of the struggle Tunstall, charged with having urged Sampson to stick to the old usages of the Church, denied the accusation which Sampson, with an equal show of timidity, had put upon him in extenuation of his own offence.

At three o'clock in the afternoon of June 10 the captain of the guard entered the council chamber of the king's palace at Westminster and declared that he was charged to take Cromwell prisoner. At the very nadir of their fortunes the bishops of the old religion had succeeded in weighing down the judgment of the king against the man who was threatening their lives. Cromwell knew what was in store for him. Passionately casting his bonnet to the ground, he asked whether this was to be the reward for all his service, appealed to the conscience of all present to declare whether he was a traitor, and then recog-

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nising the inevitable, declared that he renounced all hope of pardon, and asked that the end should come to him quickly. Angry voices assailed him. One said that he was a traitor; another that he should perish by his own bloodthirsty laws. Norfolk snatched the ribbon of St. George from his neck; the time-serving Southampton stripped him of the garter. Before nightfall the property of the traitor had been duly inventoried and removed to the royal treasury, "a sign," wrote Marillac, "that it will not be restored". On the next day the privy seal was transferred to Southampton.

It was the official explanation that Cromwell had been thwarting the king's aims for the settlement of religion, that he had revealed some secret information imparted to him by the king concerning Anne of Cleves, and that he had violated the statute of retainers.[1] But it matters little to history what the official charges may have been. On the 29th a bill of attainder was passed condemning him to suffer as a heretic or a traitor. But before he was permitted to pass out of the world, one last service was required of "Thomas Cromwell, shearman". The king was determined to be rid of his ugly wife, and Gardiner, to whom the delicate matter was entrusted, directed that the prisoner in the Tower should be examined upon his knowledge of the circumstances attending the marriage. The miserable man gave all, or nearly all, the information which was required of him. He had no accomplices in treason to betray; he could not fortify the case for a precontract; but he was lavish in evidence of the king's dislike of Anne and of the "lack of hearty consent," which was to figure as one of the grounds for the dissolution of the marriage. That the marriage would be effectually dissolved could easily be foreseen. To a synod of the Church, Gardiner, to whom the intricacies of the canon law were congenial and familiar, lucidly explained the causes of nullity, and on July 9 the united convocations of Canterbury and York declared that the marriage was void, not only by reason of the precontract, but also because it was unwillingly entered into and never consummated. The two archbishops, eighteen bishops, one bishop elect, fourteen

[1] A rumour that Cromwell intended to marry Mary and make himself King of England was transmitted from France, but probably did not affect the result (*Letters and Papers*, xv., 801).

deans, thirty-seven archdeacons, and a large number of inferior clergy appended their signatures to this disgraceful document. "The clergy of England," so Pate was instructed to tell the emperor, "being so many virtuous, learned, and grave persons, would determine nothing upon substantial grounds which they cannot defend against the whole world."[1] Parliament at least accepted the decision without question, and passed a bill on the 12th "for the dissolution of the pretended marriage with the Lady Anne of Cleves". On the 11th it was rumoured that the king would marry a niece of the Duke of Norfolk named Catharine Howard. On the 21st Marillac heard that the marriage had already taken place. But rumour had outrun fact. It was not until August 8 that Henry became the husband of the lady who, in the computation of the profane, is reckoned to be his fifth wife. CHAP. XVI.

Anne accepted her fate with a placidity as agreeable to the king as it was convenient to her material interests. She did everything which was required of her, promptly and without complaint. She confirmed the sentence of the clergy, wrote to her brother to explain that she had not been truly married; thanked Henry for his "goodness, favour, and liberality". Not a month later she was reported to be "as joyous as ever," and to be wearing new dresses every day. Ample comfort and some measure of dignity was ensured her, an income of £4,000, the manors of Richmond and Bletchingley, a handsome establishment, precedence over all the ladies in England after the queen and the daughters of the king; and so she passes out of the din into tranquillity, the least to be commiserated of Henry's brides.

Parliament was dissolved on July 24. In the whole course of the last session the upper house had not divided on a single issue. With obedient exactitude the legislature had voted liberal supplies, and performed all the evolutions which were required of it in connexion with the divorce. When Cromwell was high it passed an act of attainder against the Poles, when he was low it sent the gospellers to the stake. In the first session it allowed the king to burn heretics by proclamation; in the second session it passed an act "concerning Christ's

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xv., 865.

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religion," which confirmed in advance any decision pertaining to ceremonies or doctrine to be arrived at by the committee of divines, provided that it should have received the confirmation of the king, and should not be contrary to the laws and statutes of the realm. Yet in this second session of the last Cromwellian parliament some measures were passed of unquestioned utility. The college of physicians was given power to examine drugs sold by apothecaries, and to practise physic in all its branches; the law of marriage was improved; the Six Articles were softened by the omission of the clause which made clerical incontinence punishable by death, and an act was passed abolishing all sanctuaries save churches, churchyards, and eight places of "privilege and tuition" expressly named.

Five days after the dissolution Cromwell, protesting that he died in the catholic faith, was beheaded at Tyburn. His work was done. He had helped Henry to accomplish three great changes in the structure of the ecclesiastical system, the abolition of the papal power, the destruction of the monasteries, the introduction and compulsory use of the vernacular Bible. There are many features in his life and policy which deserve the hearty execration of posterity. He sent men to die without fair trial; he made use of torture; he was cunning, unscrupulous, truculent in the hour of success, slavish and abject in the moment of danger. Yet to his credit it must be remembered that the choice of his victims was determined not by private caprice, but by considerations of public policy. It has been disputed whether at heart he was a protestant. Heart he did not possess, but it is clear that his sympathies were with the new rather than with the old religion, and that in self-defence he would have inevitably been propelled along the path of progress. The protestants regarded him not only as the hammer of the monks, but as the man who was appointed to destroy the Romish worship in England; and Cranmer, who had found in him a patron and auxiliary, dared to express surprise and dismay at his fall. But that he should have been so regarded is no evidence that he possessed distinct theological views. His intelligence was essentially of the lay, of the material type. He saw the value of money, despised in his intelligent Italian way stupidity and obscurantism, and perhaps regarded the monarchy as the most potent instrument of material progress in the nation.

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He was no diplomatist like Wolsey, and seems to have underrated the political difficulties, while exaggerating the catholic zeal of the emperor. But if he was deficient in that wide knowledge of European affairs which came naturally to a cardinal of the undivided Church, there was a peculiar province in which his gifts were supreme. Few men who have served England can have known more of the detail of English life. His vast business as a money-lender and solicitor gave him the family secrets of most of the nobility; he was familiar with the city; the patron of foreign merchants; and by the peculiar needs of his policy, he was brought into contact with every aspect of the ecclesiastical world. He was a past-master in the art of taking inventories and valuations, of checking accounts and devising fresh sources of revenue. For ten years he managed parliament, using his influence and knowledge, not only during the period of elections, but also to secure the passage of measures, in the drafting of which he was principally concerned. His force of work and will is shown by the fact that nobody seriously challenged his pre-eminence. Audeley, the chancellor, admitted that Cromwell had seriously reduced the significance of his office; Norfolk cringed to him; the lord admiral was his humble servant; and beneath these was a troop of henchmen, pliable, adroit, hard and exact in business, as unscrupulous, overbearing, and unpopular as their master, such men as Leigh, Layton, Bedyll, Rich, Pollard, who, schooled in Cromwellian methods, carried out the details of that great business arrangement of the sixteenth century which created a new landed aristocracy by means of the revenues of the medieval Church.

CHAPTER XVII.

FRANCE, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND.

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THE fall of Cromwell, accompanied as it was by the divorce of the queen and the burning of the three gospellers, was regarded as a serious blow to the protestant interest all over Europe. "Squire Henry," remarked Luther, "means to be God and do as he pleases." An English protestant wrote to Bullinger: "A man may travel from the east of England to the west, and from the north to the south without being able to discover a single preacher who, out of a pure heart and with faith unfeigned, is seeking the glory of God. He has taken them all away—Queen Anne who was beheaded with her brother, Cromwell, Latimer, and the other bishops."[1] The changes which came over the bench of bishops were calculated to strengthen the catholic cause. Stokesley, who died in September, 1539, was succeeded in the see of London by Bonner, who was even more active in defence of the ancient tenets. The sees of Rochester and Hereford passed from pronounced reformers to Heath and Skip, who were decided catholics; while Bell and Capon, the new bishops of Worcester and Salisbury, equally belonged to the old learning. In the council the catholic party, headed by Gardiner, had won a triumph all the more dangerous to their opponents by reason of the perils which they had succeeded in escaping; but Cranmer was still primate, Audeley was still lord chancellor, and the adherents of the old learning were confronted with the established facts that the pope had been repudiated, that the monasteries had been overthrown, and that the Bible was sanctioned in the English language. So long as Henry lived complete reaction was as impossible to conceive as a frank advance along the pathway of doctrinal change. The king was now his

[1] *Original Letters* (Parker Society), i., 200; *Letters and Papers*, xvi., 578.

own prime minister, and though swollen in bulk, "using a marvellous excess in eating and drinking," and suffering at intervals from the malady in the leg which ultimately slew him, was still active and vigilant. He would rise between five and six even in midwinter; he heard mass at seven, dined at ten.[1] Nor did he in matters of Church and State ever swerve from the main principles which had guided his action ever since the breach with Rome. The act of Six Articles remained on the statute book, a warning against dogmatic innovations; but its severity was intermittently and irregularly made manifest, as if the government were not particularly anxious to find martyrs in a country which was not anxious to furnish them. CHAP. XVII.

The stream of reformation flowed steadily on. Powers had been given to the crown in 1539 to found new bishopries and to remodel old ones, and a scheme was propounded by the king himself for the creation of thirteen new dioceses out of the confiscated wealth of the abbeys. This contribution to the Church was found to be too liberal, and nobles, squires, fortresses, and ships claimed from the court of augmentations sums which, with a greater show of justice, might have been returned to the spirituality. Six bishoprics alone were created, five of which—Oxford, Peterborough, Gloucester, Chester, and Bristol—exist at this day. The see of Westminster was dissolved a few years after it was formed; and it remained for the nineteenth century to fill in the large design which Henry had sketched with his own hand but only partially executed. A plan for reducing the bishops to a fixed annual revenue of a thousand pounds a year was never executed, and some anomalous inequalities in episcopal wealth survived till comparatively recent times, and afforded themes for the satirist and the reformer. But one change, and that a necessary consequence of the downfall of the abbeys, was carried out in the cathedral system. The conventual establishments of Coventry, Rochester, Winchester, Worcester, Ely, Durham, Carlisle, and Norwich were refounded; their monastic chapters were dissolved and replaced by deans and secular canons: but whether from cynicism, economy, or prudence, the constitutional revolution was marked by a regard for vested interests; and the cathedral endowments went for

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xvi., 590, 811.

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the most part to the men who were already enjoying them, and who, if dispossessed, would have become chargeable to the exchequer for a pension. The prior or abbot of the old convent generally became the dean of the new chapter; the converted monks enjoyed the new prebends; and no less than four of the new sees were given to men who had been abbots, priors, or provincials.

The Cromwellian injunctions on the clergy so far from being reversed were expressly reinforced. Curates and parishioners were commanded on May 6, 1541, to set up "Bibles of the largest volume" in the churches under penalty of forty shillings for every month's delay; the number of saints' days was abridged; the campaign against childish superstitions, shrines, and images was waged with unabated vigour. But upon the question of the celibacy of the clergy Henry was as adamantine as Gardiner. He told De Taix that if the marriage of priests were permitted they would so increase in numbers by affinity and descent that they would tyrannise over princes themselves and make benefices hereditary.[1]

The papal party was still alive, encouraged by the fall of Cromwell and quivering with indignation at the exactions and cruelties which had followed the suppression of the northern revolt. A plot was formed by a knot of desperate men in Yorkshire, five or six of whom are said to have been priests, to ride into Pomfret fair on April 9 with their armed retainers, to kill the Bishop of Llandaff, then president of the council of the north, to seize the castle, and to call upon the countryside to rise against the tyranny of the king. A traitor disclosed the design, and the hand of the government fell heavily upon the conspirators. Three of the leaders, Lee, a gentleman, Tattersall, a clothier, and Thornton, a yeoman, were executed at Tyburn on May 9; a more prominent man, Sir John Neville, of Chevet, suffered on the same day at York for not revealing what he knew of the design; and some sixty more persons, among whom, according to Chapuys, at least twenty-five were ecclesiastics, were condemned to the extreme penalties of the law.

These severities were not sufficient. The aged Countess

[1] *Letters and Papers*, xvi., 737.

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of Salisbury, who had been attainted two years before, was privately beheaded in the Tower, without trial or even a knowledge of the pretext on which she was now condemned to suffer. This was a lesson to the catholics: another lesson was read to the nobility. Lord Leonard Grey, who as deputy in Ireland had offended the powerful house of Ormond, and was accused of treasonable complicity with the Geraldines, was tried on June 25 and executed on the 28th. The case was complex and doubtful, and in an age less prolific in state trials it would have attracted peculiar attention; but it was overshadowed by an incident which to contemporaries appeared to be more surprising. Lord Dacre of the South, a wealthy young nobleman, had been involved in a poaching affray at Hellingley in Sussex in the course of which a farmer was mortally wounded. His associates in the enterprise were duly condemned to death by the court of the king's bench; but the greatest reluctance was felt by the lords to send a young nobleman to the gallows for an unpremeditated offence. A committee headed by the lord chancellor met in the Star-Chamber and consulted how best to save the youth. The dispute was loud, so loud that Paget overheard it through two doors, but then an argument was used which may easily be imagined. "Suddenly and softly," said the listener, "they argued I wot not how, and departed to the king's bench together." The king's will was irresistible. Dacre, who had at first pleaded "not guilty" was induced "upon hope of grace" to confess, and condemned to be hanged. The council sued for a pardon, but all in vain. On the 29th he was executed at the common gibbet of London with his three companions, Mantell, one of the king's pensioners, Frowdes, a controller of the customs, and one Reddyn, of a Kentish family, "all three gentlemen of good house, aged twenty-five to thirty, and much esteemed".[1] Then having cleared the Tower, Henry set out upon a progress through the north.

He brought with him everything which might impress those unquiet regions with a sense of his power and magnificence; his finest tapestry and plate, his most sumptuous costumes, his glittering retinue of archers, pages, and gentlemen, the two

[1] The account given in Camden's *Elizabeth*, A.D. 1594, should be checked by *Letters and Papers*, xvi., 931, 932.

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dukes, and the chief officers of state. Large sums were offered in token of welcome or repentance, as the king travelled from Stamford to Lincoln, from Lincoln to York, and then on to Newcastle and Hull. The Archbishop of York made his submission, upon bended knee, tendered a sum of £600, and was commanded to cause all the shrines "with their hovels" to be taken down through his province. So sumptuous were the preparations in the northern capital that it was rumoured that a meeting would take place between the Kings of England and Scotland, or else that Queen Catharine would be crowned in York. But James V. was now controlled by the clerical party, which saw in Henry a dangerous heretic anxious to infect their country and then to deprive it of independence; and wisely or unwisely James declined to trust himself across the border to the tender mercies of his formidable uncle.

For Catharine Howard there was to be no coronation. On November 2, soon after the end of the northern progress, the king was placed in possession of evidence which proved that his wife had been guilty of grave misconduct before her marriage. For a few days he doubted, but the evidence was too strong to be denied, and proof was subsequently added that the queen's licentious courses had not been terminated by her union with Henry. The king was beside himself with passion. At one time he called for a sword to slay her; at another time he would weep, "regretting his ill-luck in meeting with such ill-conditioned wives, and blaming his council for this last mischief". The whole Howard connexion was placed in a position of grave danger, from which Norfolk succeeded in extricating himself by admitting "the abominable deeds" and "repeated treasons" of his kin. Less adroit or more guilty the Dowager-Duchess of Norfolk, her son, Lord William Howard, her daughter, and her daughter-in-law were condemned to perpetual imprisonment and loss of goods for having failed to divulge their knowledge of the queen's misconduct; and the parliament which opened on January 16, 1542, relieved Henry of his embarrassments by passing an act of attainder against the queen and Lady Rochford. To find the gravest offence against the state in a breach of morals was an arbitrary extension of the most elastic law in the statute book, and that doubt might be avoided in future, the act which sent Catharine Howard to the

block contained the monstrous provision that an unchaste woman marrying the king was guilty of high treason. CHAP. XVII.

She was beheaded on Tower Green in the presence of Norfolk and Surrey on February 13, confessing her guilt and with a prayer upon her lips for the welfare of the king. The spirits of the monarch, which had been depressed during the shameful investigations, were relieved by their auspicious termination, and the pious austerities of Lent were preceded by three days of ostentatious revelry. But for a time matrimony had lost its savour; and more than a year elapsed during which Henry suffered or enjoyed the solitary state. At last, on June 12, 1543, a widow twenty years his junior, and suspected not unjustly of protestant sympathies, was led to the altar. The new queen was Catharine Parr, widow of that Lord Latimer who had figured as a catholic leader in the Pilgrimage of Grace. "She is not nearly so beautiful as Anne of Cleves," wrote Chapuys, whose depreciation must be weighed against the eulogy of protestant partisans. She had, however, what is better than beauty, gentleness, discretion, and culture. Watchful of the king's abrupt and angry humours, she was prompt to employ such influence as she possessed on the side of clemency, and in that fierce and licentious court, the mild queen Catharine, with her books, her devotions, her seemly reverence for the Lady Mary, her strict sense of discipline, is a refreshing figure.

Meanwhile England had drifted into war. Ever since the breach with Rome the system pursued by the king had been essentially defensive. Other countries had been racked by wars, civil and foreign; England alone, as Audeley told parliament in January, 1542, had for thirteen years been immune from invasion. That this immunity was the result rather of a happy combination of circumstances than of a studious avoidance of causes calculated to give offence to foreign powers cannot be denied. Even when France was most closely bound to the empire, when the north was seething with disaffection, and the pope was urging the two catholic powers to punish the heretic king, English diplomacy had been watchful and tricky, but had never condescended to the language of submission. Preparations had been steadily pushed on to meet external danger; and large sums had been spent upon fortifications, upon the purchase and building of ships, upon heavy artillery

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and the munitions of war. Never had the country been better prepared to meet an enemy than at the close of the great ecclesiastical revolution, which in other lands had produced long-drawn agonies of civil strife. It was true that there was a division of sympathies, that one party regretted the pope, and that another party wished a root-and-branch reformation of dogma; but loyalty was the strongest political motive of the country, and while Gardiner and Cranmer found places at the board, each party was permitted to believe that it had a future. The king was a conservative and balancing influence, the symbol of national pride and national aspirations, and when he called for war he could rely upon the nation to follow him.

In the summer of 1541 two envoys of the French king, journeying through Italy with a message to the Turk, were captured by the imperial governor of Milan and put to death. The crime was inexcusable, aroused deep resentment in Paris, and embittered the relations between Charles and Francis. Each party began to look out for an ally, and Henry resumed the game, in which he was now a past master, of playing off Charles against Francis, and Francis against Charles. The French offered the hand of the Duke of Orleans for the Lady Mary, and proposed, in February, 1542, a meeting of the three sovereigns of France, England, and Scotland. The English were polite, and encouraged hopes of agreement, but the discerning eye of Chapuys perceived that the whole English council was in favour of the imperial alliance. War broke out on the continent in July, but though Charles had already made overtures to England, Henry was unwilling to commit himself prematurely to a continental campaign. He would draft men into Calais, proclaim his amicable neutrality, lecture the French upon their responsibilities to a neutral power, and then, while France and the empire were locked in struggle, he would turn and rend the Scots.

The policy of the Scottish crown was controlled in the French and catholic interest. The king was young and chivalrous, and the clergy who guided his counsels had every reason to distrust the machinations of Henry. Pressed in 1535 to cast off the Bishop of Rome and to seize the property of the Church, James determined to remain loyal to the old faith and the old alliance. He declined to meet Henry at York in 1536,

fearing things which indeed were not improbable, that his friends would be kidnapped, that he would be made to acknowledge vassalage to the English crown, in any case that a course would be shaped for him by the masterful uncle whom his advisers had taught him to distrust as the enemy of their land and as a traitor to their religion. In September he sailed to France and there married Madeleine, the fair young daughter of Francis I. His queen died on July 7, 1537, six months after, but this calamity did not snap, rather it was the means of renewing the Franco-Scottish connexion. A second bride was sought and found in France, Mary of Lorraine, the daughter of the Duke of Guise and the widow of the Duke of Longueville. Large in frame, strong and resolved in character, possessed by the tenacious and passionate orthodoxy of her house, Mary of Guise was singled out to be James's bride by a man who intended to undo the work of the Tudor marriage and to preserve Scotland in political independence of her southern neighbour and in submissive loyalty to Rome. David Beaton, Bishop of St. Andrews, has a sinister reputation. He sent heretics to the stake; his life was impure; he was a soldier prelate, happier in the saddle than in the councils of divines, and well fitted for the atmosphere of crime and craft into which fate had thrown him. But he was a potent figure, knowing his own mind, pursuing his own purpose, ruthless, inflexible, the real leader of his nation at one of the critical and dark hours of its history. He had received some part of his education in Paris, and had acted as Scottish resident at the French court. In 1538 Paul III. sent him the cardinal's hat; and as the protagonist of the French connexion and the papal cause in Scotland, Henry regarded him as a proper mark for destruction.

It did not require much discernment to perceive that if Scotland could be torn from the Roman connexion, her political dependence on France would wither away. Accordingly in 1540 Sir Ralph Sadler was sent to Edinburgh to discredit Beaton with the king, to urge that the goods of the monasteries should be appropriated by the crown and to suggest a meeting between James and Henry. But so far from finding affairs propitious to this design, Sadler discovered that the king was in the hands of the clergy, and that the clergy were set upon persecution. Overtures for a meeting were renewed in 1542, but

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they came to nothing, and meanwhile the friction between the northern and the southern court steadily increased. Scotland had harboured fugitives of the pilgrimage of grace, and Henry demanded their extradition. Then early in July, trouble broke out on the border and the two countries drifted into war. The blame of beginning the border raids was thrown by the English on the Scots, by the Scots on the English; but border troubles were always susceptible of arrangement, and both sovereigns professed pacific intentions. An incident however occurred which aggravated the friction. On August 24 Sir Robert Bowes, warden of the middle marches, raiding into Teviotdale, fell, with 400 or 500 English borderers, into the hands of the enemy. Such was the raid of Hadden Rig, a victory which James found it difficult to forget, and Henry impossible to forgive. It was settled that Norfolk should invade Scotland on October 6 unless the Scots should accept the conditions to be proposed to them at a conference at York.

Henry's terms were as follows: a perpetual peace between Scotland and England; a treaty to be effectual against all potentates spiritual and temporal, in other words, if need be, against the pope and France; a stipulation that the Scottish king should repair to London before Christmas, and that hostages should be delivered until the king's coming and the conclusion of the treaty. Finally he required that the prisoners of Hadden Rig should be released, and that compensation should be given for damage done. These terms James instructed his agents to decline. He would not openly bind himself to come farther south than York, nor to meet Henry before Christmas; and Learmouth, one of the Scottish commissioners who travelled on to Greenwich, failed to obtain a reduction in the English demands. The council still adhered to the three essential principles: the release of the prisoners, the perpetual peace, the abandonment without reservation of the French alliance.

Norfolk's October raid was a deplorable failure. It had been difficult to feed the army on its march from York to Newcastle; it was not easier to find adequate supplies for the four days' journey between Newcastle and Berwick; and north of the border progress was almost impossible. The carts stuck in the mud or broke down in the rough moorland tracks; to march five miles a day was an achievement; the stock of beer gave

out; the commander fell ill. In the inside of a week the army was back again in Berwick, leaving a few charred villages behind it as a memento of English prowess. Henry expressed a not unreasonable wish that "such a costly and notable enterprise had been more displeasant to the enemies". CHAP. XVII.

The Scottish counterstroke was even more disastrous. While the moon was at its full, in the last week of November, James decided to make a raid into Cumberland, and marched a large army into the debateable land. Sir Thomas Wharton, warden of the western marches, had been apprised of the Scottish musters, and at break of day on the 24th rode out of Carlisle with 300 men at his heels to meet the enemy. The beacons had been fired during the night to put the marches in readiness, and by the time Wharton reached the Leven his force numbered some 1,200 horse and 2,000 foot. As the Scots, some 18,000 strong, advanced, burning and ravaging, the English mounted spearmen galloped forward to the attack and drove them headlong in a wild confused mass to Sandyford. There the routed army found in front of them the waters of the Esk, and on the left hand the treacherous expanse of Solway Moss. The tide had risen, and many of the fugitives were drowned before they could reach the northern bank. Five thousand horses were bogged in the moss and taken. There was little resistance, and the temper of the Scottish army may be gauged by the fact that but twenty were slain in battle, and that no less than 1,200 surrendered to the famous "prickers," or light horse, of the western border. A party escaping westward through Liddesdale was spoiled of horses and trappings by the dalesmen. Two earls, Cassilis and Glencairn, five barons, Maxwell, Fleming, Somervell, Oliphant, and Gray, 500 lairds and gentlemen, twenty pieces of ordnance, thirty standards, were among the trophies of the day. Sir Oliver Sinclair, the king's favourite, who bore the royal standard, was numbered among the captives. The victory of Solway Moss was obtained at the cost of seven English lives.

The tidings of that November morning brought the Scottish king to the grave. With the active consent of Beaton, Maxwell, Sinclair, and Carr, but against the opinion of the rest of Scotland, James had planned the enterprise which had ended in such ignominious disaster. Nothing had succeeded with him.

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His first wife had died; he had lost his two boys; and now, after an anxious passage of policy, in which he had been torn hither and thither by fierce and conflicting eddies of counsel, he had wasted an army and ruined a reputation. If legend is to be trusted the loss of his favourite weighed heaviest on his spirit. "His continued complaint," says Knox, "was, 'Oh! fled Oliver! Is Oliver there? Oh! fled Oliver!' And these words in his melancholy, and as it were carried away in a trance, repeated he from time to time to the hour of his death." That hour was soon to come. On December 5 he was able to take part in a council at Edinburgh; then he sickened. Three days later, lying at Falkland upon his death-bed, he learned that Mary of Guise was delivered of a daughter—the heiress of the Scottish crown. The legend says that the dying king turned his face to the wall saying: "The devil go with it, it will end as it began; it came with a lass, and it will pass with a lass". At midnight on Thursday, December 14, Scotland was without a master.

A Frenchwoman, a new-born girl, a cardinal whose policy had issued in an overwhelming disaster, such were the negligible obstacles which appeared to strew the path leading to the union of England and Scotland. On January 4, 1543, Henry wrote to the council of Scotland warning them that no fair language would deter him from using the opportunity to unite the two realms, either by conformity, as he desired, or otherwise. The prisoners of Solway Moss were made to subscribe an article requiring the king to take the keeping of the young daughter of Scotland to be married to Prince Edward, "thereby to unite both realms". Ten of the prisoners, including Cassilis, Glencairn, Maxwell, Fleming, and Somervell, subscribed a further secret article that they would help the king to obtain the crown of Scotland in case of the death of the child. The victory was thus used to form the nucleus of an Anglo-Scottish party, who would assist Henry to get the child, the cardinal, the fortresses, and all the opponents of the English policy into his hands. His council had already written for a map of the whole of Scotland. In November an official treatise was printed in London demonstrating "the true and right title that the king's most royal majesty hath to the sovereignty of Scotland".

A year was sufficient, not indeed to exhaust, but to exhibit the weakness of Henry's machinations. In the beginning all

appeared to go smoothly. The Earl of Arran, who had been placed at the head of the government, espoused the English interest, plotted to send Beaton to England, and actually succeeded for a time in keeping him in confinement. "A good soft God's man and loveth well to look upon the Scriptures" was the report of a contemporary divine, who regarded this unstable vessel as the instrument of the divine purpose. A Scottish parliament, meeting at Edinburgh in March, 1543, decreed that the Bible should be published in the vulgar tongue, and that ambassadors should be sent to London to treat of the royal marriage. All this was in accordance with English instigations. Religious and secular policy were guided by Henry who, through Sadler, instructed the governor of Scotland how he was to protect the orthodox faith, extirpate the monks and friars, and allocate the revenues of the dissolved abbeys. On July 1, two treaties were signed at Greenwich, which embodied Henry's scheme for the union of the kingdoms. The first was a treaty of peace; the second a treaty of marriage between Prince Edward, then in his sixth, and Mary Queen of Scotland, then in her first year. It was agreed that, for the better care and education of his future daughter-in-law, the king might send an English nobleman or gentleman with his wife to reside with her; that on the completion of her tenth year she should come to England there to abide till her marriage, and that the kingdom of Scotland should continue to retain its old laws and liberties. Six Scottish noblemen were to be delivered into England as hostages for the observance of the pact. CHAP. XVII.

The treaty of Greenwich was waste-paper before the ink was dry. However statesmanlike may have been the project of a union of the two crowns, it was the summit of unwisdom in Henry to disinter the old pretensions to suzerainty. "They had liever," wrote Sadler from Edinburgh, "suffer extremity than be subject to England, for they will have their realm free and their own law and custom." The priests refused to minister sacraments or to say the mass while Beaton was in prison, and the cardinal was accordingly removed to his castle of St. Andrews, whence he soon emerged free and formidable as ever. On July 24, marching on Linlithgow at the head of 6,000 men, he demanded and obtained a share in the government of

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the kingdom and in the custody of the queen. This was an instalment of a larger triumph. The party of "the heretics and the English lords" felt themselves more and more isolated and helpless, as all the opportunists threw in their lot with the "scribes and pharisees of the cast of France". It was vain to expect help from England, for, as Arran told Sadler, if 5,000 Englishmen were despatched to his support, 20,000 Scots would forsake him. Finally, on September 3, Arran slipped out of Edinburgh to Stirling, did penance for his impiety, received absolution for his sins, and agreed to deliver all the castles in Scotland into the hands of the cardinal. The wheel had swung round full circle. The young queen was crowned, the council was established, Beaton was the master of the state; and though the country was exhausted, the kirkmen were prepared to brave the desolations of war rather than to submit to the terms which had been extracted from the feeble government of Arran. On December 11, the Scottish parliament, using the pretext that some Scottish merchant vessels had been taken by the English in the high seas, repudiated the treaty of Greenwich, and renewed the old alliance with France. A month earlier Sadler had correctly reported that if King Henry's "godly purposes" were to be accomplished, it must be with his own power, for the whole fabric of an English party in Scotland had been built upon the sand, and had now fallen about its treacherous foundations.

Meanwhile, on June 22, Henry had sent an ultimatum to France, so framed as to be equivalent to a declaration of war. The step was formally justified by several considerations: the alliance of France with the Turk, the non-payment of the French pensions to England during the last eleven years, the maintenance of English rebels, the imprisonment of divers English merchants without cause, and in particular the intimate connexion of France with the origin and continuance of Scottish hostilities. The ultimatum was despatched at a time when Henry believed that the affairs of Scotland were safely settled; but a secret war treaty with Charles had been signed as early as February, and before the actual declaration English adventurers were serving with the Burgundian colours against the French. It was considered incredible insolence that the French king should fortify Ardres, a town on his own territory

but inconveniently menacing to Calais, an outrage on European morals that he should be allied with the Turk, a wanton affront that he should encourage the Scots to resist the godly designs of the English king. The burden of the war proved to be enormous. A forced loan, amounting to some 10 per cent., was levied in 1542, which the king was dispensed from repaying by a statute passed in the following year. A subsidy in the shape of a graduated income tax, rising from 4d. to 2s. in the pound on the goods, and from 8d. to 3s. on the lands of the temporality; a graduated tax upon the coin, plate, jewels, and lands of "corporations, brotherhoods, fraternities, and communalties"; a subsidy of 6s. in the pound spread over three years upon the benefices and perpetuities of the spirituality, were granted by the parliament of 1543. Crown lands were sold and mortgaged: another compulsory loan was wrung in 1544 from the citizens of London; a benevolence assessed at the rate of 2s. in the pound was levied in 1545; the gold and silver coinage was debased. Yet great as was the burden, and unconstitutional as were the expedients for meeting the demands of the war, there was no repetition of the disorders of 1525. An alderman, refusing to pay the benevolence in 1545, was sent to die in the Scottish wars; a spectacle duly noted by contemporaries as partaking of comedy.

The war began modestly with the despatch, in July, 1543, of a small force under Sir John Wallop, to serve for 112 days with the imperial army in Flanders. Wallop assisted at the siege of Landrécies, which was raised upon the approach of a French army, and returned to his winter quarters with no notable exploit to his credit. The great effort was reserved for 1544, when Henry and Charles, each at the head of 35,000 foot and 7,000 horse, should invade France, the king by the passage of the Somme, the emperor by Champagne, and march towards Paris as diligently as strategy, victuals, and the enemy should permit. To secure the Scottish frontier in his absence Henry petitioned for the help of 1,000 Spanish harquebusiers.—

Before the king crossed the Channel it was decided to manifest to the Scots how calamitous were the consequences of Beaton's ascendency. The task of demonstration was entrusted to Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, the uncle of the heir to the throne, and since the fall of Catharine Howard the

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most influential noble at the court. He was charged to destroy Edinburgh, to pillage Holyrood House, to sack, burn, and subvert Leith, and all the towns and villages round, putting man, woman and child to the sword where resistance was made; and then to spread desolation into Fife, and so to destroy the cardinal's town at St. Andrews, "as the upper stone may be the nether and not one stick stand by another". Hertford pointed out that while simple devastation would drive the Scots to despair, the fortification of Leith, a town commanding the Forth, and therefore capable of intercepting the passage into Edinburgh of sea-borne supplies, would be the easiest mode of rallying the waverers and reducing the country to submission. His counsel was repelled. To an expensive establishment in the north Henry preferred methods briefer, cheaper, and more directly punitive. His design was executed with strict fidelity. On May 3 an English fleet landed an army at Leith, which, receiving reinforcements from the east and middle marches, destroyed the palace and abbey of Holyrood, burnt every house in Edinburgh and Leith, and fired every village and cornstack within a radius of seven miles. Then having spread a band of desolation round the Scottish capital, having burnt the pier of Leith, annexed or destroyed the shipping, captured a treasure of £10,000, and in various other ways executed the king's "godly purpose," army and fleet returned to Berwick, pillaging and burning as they went.

On July 14 Henry crossed the Channel to Calais to superintend, though not to lead, the army which had preceded him. His health was now far from good, his legs so swollen that it was a wonder to those who saw him that he was not compelled to keep his bed; but in the preparations of the campaign he had fallen little short of his accustomed measure of zeal and activity, interesting himself in the construction of siege engines and portable boats, of ovens made to be carried on waggons, and mills that would grind as the waggons moved. His ally Charles was marching on St. Dizier; his own army was divided into two wards, one of which, under Norfolk and Russell, was lying before Montreuil, while the other, under Suffolk, encamped at Marquise, was designed to effect the capture of Boulogne. The English army at this time was not an instrument possessing any high degree of mobility, precision, or impact.

Picardy was almost undefended, and while Francis was gathering an army to arrest the progress of the imperialists, Henry should have had no difficulty in over-running that province. Du Biez, the French commander, had thrown himself into Montreuil with nearly 3,000 troops, leaving Boulogne in the hands of a young commander, Jacques de Coucy, Seigneur de Vervins, and 500 men. On September 11 a mine was sprung under the castle of Boulogne, and on the 14th the town capitulated. But this success gained over a young and inexperienced captain marked the term of English victories. The siege of Montreuil was never vigorously pressed, and on the 26th, on the news that the dauphin was approaching with an army to the relief of the town, Norfolk and Russell broke up their camp and retired on Boulogne. Henry had already deemed it prudent to recross the Channel. He could no longer count upon the assistance of his ally. CHAP. XVII.

Coalitions in war are rarely effective, and the league between Charles and Henry was peculiarly soluble. Charles wished to force Francis to abandon Milan and the Lutherans; Henry wished to force him to give up the Scots. Henry might have designs upon Rouen, but, as Chapuys soon discerned, had no intention of venturing his troops upon a march to Paris; while Charles, who had crushed the Duke of Cleves, was willing, after inflicting upon his rival a certain measure of punishment, to make a peace with France which would enable him to control the religious and political difficulties of Germany. Either party suspected the other from the first. Charles had no love for the man who, having repudiated his aunt, now compelled him to declare Scotland among his enemies to the detriment of Flemish trade. Henry grumbled at the inadequacy of the Flemish commissariat, and openly avowed that Boulogne was more valuable to him than Paris. These divergencies of aim were clear to the French, who lost no time in attempting to separate their assailants. Henry was the first to receive and consider the French overtures, but, intent upon terms such as only the joint pressure of the two invading powers would be likely to extract for him, declined to treat without Charles. Charles then decided to treat without Henry.

The peace of Crespy, signed on September 18, 1544, was condemned in England as an act of desertion. But Charles

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knew that Henry was simultaneously treating with France; he communicated to his ally the conditions which he understood to be attainable for both parties; pressed Henry to accept them, and believed that he had Henry's sanction, verbally conveyed through the Bishop of Arras, to make terms with the enemy, provided that England was comprehended in the arrangement. So Charles made peace for himself, and offered to mediate a peace for his ally. But there was a sunken rock which shattered every prospect of agreement between France and England. Henry was determined to keep, and Francis was determined to recover, Boulogne. Negotiations went on through the autumn at Calais and at Brussels, and foundered always at the same fatal spot. Francis offered to pay pensions, arrears, indemnities; Henry consented to withdraw his first demand for Ardres and Guisnes; but upon Boulogne he was inexorable. It was represented that not a man in England would consent to its surrender. Yet the war was costing the country some £600,000 or £700,000 a year.

A summary of the European situation revealed one contingency, not perhaps immediately probable, and yet sufficiently serious to demand the contrivance of prophylactics. The pope had viewed the alliance of Charles and Henry with grave displeasure, and the treaty of Crespy, which reconciled the two catholic powers, detached Francis from the Turk and pledged him to aid the emperor and his brother Ferdinand the King of the Romans in pacifying the religious discord in Germany, was held with justice to be a great triumph for the catholic cause. The last obstacle had now disappeared which hindered the meeting of a council charged with the duty of restoring the unity, of purifying the morals, and of fixing in an authoritative form the doctrine of the Church; and on November 19, 1544, a bull was issued intimating that the general council was to meet at Trent in the spring of the following year. But there was one blot upon the prospect which the head of the catholic Church was anxious to efface. The treaty of Crespy had loosened, but it had not dissolved, the Anglo-Imperial alliance, and the renewal of the catholic league against England for the purpose of securing religious reunion was now an object of papal diplomacy. In December Francesco Sfondrato, Archbishop of Amalfi, was in Brussels

with instructions to unite Charles and Francis against the English heretic. CHAP. XVII.

To meet such a combination it was necessary to renew relations with the German protestants. In 1543 Henry had tried to impress the emperor with his catholic orthodoxy. In 1545, opening out negotiations with the Landgrave of Hesse with a view to the formation of a defensive league which should comprise Denmark and Holstein and as many German towns and provinces as should care to join, he spoke of the points of contact between the Anglican Church and the Lutheran communion. "We have," he wrote in February, "one common and certain enemy, the Bishop of Rome, and a like zeal and meaning for the right and sincere setting forth of God's glory and His holy word;" and he suggested that a joint commission upon religion might find a basis of agreement, "either party somewhat relenting from extremities and framing themselves to a godly indifferency and moderation". The alliance was a *pis aller* to be used in the event of a breach with Charles, and there was a moment early in 1545 when the friction was so great between London and Brussels as to threaten a rupture. That moment passed away. An irritating dispute, arising out of the arrest of certain Flemish ships which had been carrying merchandise to France, was composed on April 6; and it became more and more evident that Charles, so far from desiring to quarrel with England, was only anxious to terminate the struggle between England and France. The spectre of the Anglo-Lutheran union faded gradually into the background, though Henry continued to keep up friendly relations with the protestant courts.

Though the circle of the war had been contracted by the peace of Crespy, it continued to be waged by England, Scotland, and France. That he might create a Scottish party to balance Cardinal Beaton, Henry signed a treaty with the Earl of Lennox on June 26, 1544, married him to his niece, Lady Margaret Douglas, daughter of Queen Margaret and James IV., and promised to appoint him governor of Scotland when that kingdom should fall into his hands. But a repulse before the walls of Dumbarton showed Lennox to be no more effectual an instrument than Arran, and a defeat of Sir Ralph Evers at Ancrum Moor on February 27, 1545, proved that the Scots

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were undismayed by Hertford's devastations and still able to hold their own upon the border. With these evidences of Scottish pertinacity before him, and encouraged by the withdrawal of the emperor, Francis elaborated in May a scheme of offensive operations, the ultimate purpose of which was the recapture of Boulogne. A great fleet was gathered in the Norman harbours, which was to make a descent upon some point upon the English coast, attack and capture the English navy, and hold the Channel till the middle of August. In the meantime Marshal du Biez was to build a fort opposite the mouth of Boulogne harbour, so contrived as to command the entry and to prevent sea-borne supplies from being conveyed to the English garrison. It was calculated that a fort large enough to hold 4,000 or 5,000 men would be ready by the time of the return of the fleet, and that Boulogne would be completely cut off from the sea. Then while Du Biez was holding the English garrison on the coast, Francis himself with a large army would take Guisnes, ravage the Terre d'Oise, and throwing himself between Calais and Boulogne, effectually prevent assistance reaching the beleaguered garrison from the east. The fleet, consisting of 150 large sailing ships, sixty pinnaces, and twenty-five galleys, was collected early in July and placed under the command of Admiral d'Annebault.[1]

The French found the country well prepared to receive them. The Scottish fleet had been swept out of existence, and the two royal galleons taken at Leith were now incorporated into the English navy. An English army watched the borders, and by the middle of June three other armies, each 30,000 strong, were in readiness south of the Trent. The coast fortifications had been carefully reviewed and strengthened. The garrison of the Isle of Wight was reinforced; artillery was sent into Thanet; bulwarks were ordered for Yarmouth and Lowestoft; the beacons and signals which might guide an enemy's fleet up the Thames were carefully removed. A commission of array for the western counties was sent to Lord Russell, who having come into possession of the abbey lands of Tavistock, was one of the leading magnates of Devonshire; and it was his duty to see that the royal fleet at Portsmouth

[1] *Mémoires de Martin du Bellay*, liv. x., pp. 560-82.

did not lack for the west-country crews, who then, as now, were the backbone of our naval strength. On July 17 a fleet of eighty sail, "forty of the ships large and beautiful," lay in Portsmouth harbour under the command of John Dudley, Lord Lisle, son of the ill-famed extortioner. Some sixty more vessels were shortly expected from the west, and the king was in the town, anxious to make trial of his new invention, a long and narrow row-boat, armed not only with a bowchaser, but with two short guns in the broadside under the half-deck.

On the 18th the French fleet appeared in the Solent. A light breeze blew from the land, and Lisle came out in the hope that he might draw his adversary after him under range of the shore guns. The French admiral saw the trap, and was too wary to walk into it; but as the wind dropped on the morrow, he sent his galleys into the harbour. Propelled by oars, and consequently possessing a maximum of mobility at the very time at which the sailing vessel is deprived of mobility altogether, the galley with its bowchaser and formidable ram was always likely to be dangerous in calm weather; and where heavy sailing vessels were crowded in a narrow space, a well-directed galley attack was a thing particularly to be dreaded. In 1513 English ships had met the Mediterranean galleys, and had suffered a repulse; and it must have seemed for a time on Monday, the 19th, as if history would repeat itself, save that on this occasion the galleys were the attacking, and not the defending force. The *Mary Rose*, attempting to turn round, heeled over, and went to the bottom with Sir George Carew, her captain, and more than 500 of her crew. The *Great Harry* was saved with difficulty, and a few more hours of calm might have made the situation anxious. Suddenly a land wind rose; and the English, seizing the advantage of wind and tide, slipped cable and bore down on the galleys. So sudden was the change, that the Frenchmen had the greatest difficulty in making good their escape, molested by the artillery of the row-boats which pursued with great celerity, and poured in a fire to which the galleys were unable to reply. But again it was not Lisle's intention to draw on a general engagement in the Solent. For the second time the English fleet came out, tempted the French to battle, and then retreated to the harbour. Having the superior force, D'Annebault was anxious

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to fight the English outside the harbour, and accordingly on the following day landed troops on the Isle of Wight, with instructions to fire the villages, in the hope that the flame and smoke would spur Lisle to indiscretion. But the French landing parties were beaten back with some loss, and the columns of smoke, which were easily descried from Portsmouth, failed to elicit a response from the English fleet. The plan miscarried. Lisle would not fight in the open. The French pilots reported that without knowledge of the currents and sandbanks, it would be rash to attempt the entry of Portsmouth harbour, and weighty reasons were adduced against leaving a force in the Isle of Wight. On the 24th the French fleet drew away and shaped its course for the narrow seas.

Portsmouth was safe, but the last had not been seen of the French armada. Having landed 4,000 troops and 3,000 pioneers at Boulogne, D'Annebault was driven across the Channel by force of weather, and on August 15 Lisle reported that the French fleet was off Shoreham. The sea was calm; a light air blew from the south-east; and under conditions favourable to the galleys and unfavourable to the great ships, the French admiral prepared to attack. The English fleet numbered 104 sail, 24 in the van under Sir Thomas Clere, 40 in the main battle under the admiral, and 40 in the wing under Tyrell. The force dependent upon oars had been strengthened at the expense of the force dependent upon sails alone. An engagement took place between the French galleys and the English "wing," in which the advantage lay with the English. "*The Mistress*," reported Lisle, "the *Anne Gallaunt*, the *Greyhound* with all your majesty's shallops and rowing pieces did their parts right well; but especially the *Mistress* and the *Anne Gallaunt* did so handle the galleys as well with their sides as their prows that your great ships had little to do." In the evening D'Annebault drew up and the two fleets came to anchor within a league of one another. But in the night the wind freshened, and when morning broke Lisle descried from the maintop a line of sail five miles long scudding away upon the horizon.

The great enterprise had failed, and D'Annebault's fleet, which was to have brought the English to their senses, broke up before August was out, its crews decimated by plague, and

its purpose unaccomplished. "The poor fishermen," reported Lisle, "say that there was never journey so costly to France as this has been for so short a voyage, nor more shame spoken of amongst themselves." Nor was the remainder of the French military programme more successful. A fort was indeed built opposite Boulogne, but it was neither ready by mid August nor was it so placed as to command the harbour, and though Du Biez raided the Terre d'Oise, the communications of the English garrison both with Calais and the sea remained unimpaired. The Channel was in the command of England, and while Lisle raided and burnt Tréport, the west-country adventurers—"some of them naming themselves Scots and some with vizors"—plundered every Spanish, Portuguese, and Flemish vessel which came up out of the bay. CHAP. XVII.

Meanwhile the cost of the war had been tremendous. "You see," wrote Wriothesley to Paget, "the king's majesty hath this year and the last year spent £1,300,000 or thereabouts, and his subsidy and benevolence ministering scant £30,000 thereof, as I muse sometime where the rest being so great a sum hath been gotten." Wheat, save in Norfolk, was up to 20s. a quarter; plate had been melted and coined; the currency had been enhanced; a loan had been raised in Antwerp. "I am at my wit's end," wrote Wriothesley in November, "how we shall possibly shift for the next three months." An estimate of the revenues of the court of augmentations was unobtainable, but not more than £100,000 was still to come in from all the sales, and only £3,000 was immediately available. "The mints, our holy anchor, doth prepare £15,000"; £1,000 could be raised from the duchy, a like sum from the wards. Ten thousand pounds was still due from the subsidy, but would not come in till Candlemas. Four or five thousand pounds might ultimately be wrung from the surveyors. Norfolk and the council were anxious for peace, and a rebuke was conveyed to Surrey for his vehemence in urging that Boulogne should be retained. Gardiner, who was sent over to press the negotiations at Brussels, was of the same opinion. "Master Secretary," he wrote to Paget, on November 7, "if we take peace now, we establish the valiantness of England for ever; if we leave game now, we be esteemed to have treasure infinite, and to exceed all other in valiantness."

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Nor were the members of Henry's council alone in their desire for peace. The progress of the war was watched with eyes of apprehension by the German protestants, who had every reason to expect that if it continued Charles would be free to enforce his views of catholic orthodoxy upon Germany at the point of the sword. A German embassy, the most prominent members of which were Bruno and Sturmius, was sent through Paris to Calais to urge that a prolongation of war would increase the power of the emperor, draw France to the side of the pope, and so weaken England as to lead to the destruction of European protestantism. Henry cared little for the fate of Lutheran divinity. His object was to make the French give up Boulogne and abandon the Scots. Vainly did the brilliant Paget exert all his diplomatic arts. Francis would not betray the Scots; Henry was immovable on the subject of Boulogne, and planned fresh operations for the spring. He made parliament grant him a subsidy and a free hand with the colleges and chantries, securing by his repeated presence at the debates a tranquil passage for both measures. He hired Germans, Spaniards, and Italians at rates which, compared with the pay of a mere Englishman, appeared to Paget to be monstrous. He sent Vaughan to Antwerp to negotiate a new loan from the Fuggers. But by this time the credit of the country was well-nigh exhausted. "Ye have already," wrote Vaughan on February 14, "had £100,000 on the credit of London. If ye will have me press men over much, ye shall too much discern that which were better not known."[1] The new loan, amounting to some £79,000, would not support the garrison of Boulogne for a year; and on April 27 Hertford reported that he could not even pay the wages of his mercenaries.[2]

Peace then was a necessity. The treaty of June 7, 1546, provided that France should pay to England the old pensions, namely, a life pension to the king of 100,000 crowns, and a perpetual pension for England of 50,000 crowns; that England should remain in possession of Boulogne and the Boulonnais for eight years, but that at the expiration of that period they should be restored to France upon payment of 2,000,000

[1] Record Office, *State Papers*, BB, 844. [2] *Ibid.*, CC, 185.

crowns, a sum claimed as covering the arrears of the pensions, the fortifications of Boulogne, and the expenses of the war. The Scots were to be comprehended in the arrangements, provided that they still considered themselves bound by the Greenwich treaties of 1543. But the political justification of the war consisted in the accomplishment of an object which the treaty with France could not in itself secure. Boulogne was a barren conquest; it cost more than its worth; it could never be held; and no French payments were likely to make good the waste of treasure which the war had occasioned. The union of England and Scotland, cemented by the marriage of Edward and Mary, was a different affair, and if force could have bent the Scots to willing compliance, no statesman could have blamed its employment.

One form of force is war, another is assassination; both were practised by the English government against the Scots. In September, 1545, Hertford was again launched across the border, and outdid all his previous efforts. He fired Kelso, Home, Melrose, and Dryburgh; he demolished 7 monasteries, 16 castles, 5 market towns, 243 villages, 13 mills, and 3 hospitals: but even so the Scots remained unconvinced. Other methods might be more effectual. Henry had long plotted the assassination of his great antagonist Cardinal Beaton, and at last in the spring of 1546, just before the French peace, fortune smiled upon his purpose. The cardinal had many enemies, both as a politician and as a persecutor. On March 2 he had caused a preacher named George Wishart to be burnt to death as a heretic. The burning of the martyr branded itself deep on the hearts of all who wished ill to the priests and to the pope, and the friends of Wishart swore to avenge him. Early on May 29 they forced their way into the castle of St. Andrews, stabbed the cardinal to death, and hung his body over the walls. It was a savage act, joyfully recorded by John Knox, and joyfully welcomed in the English council. The murderers were besieged in St. Andrews castle; an English fleet was sent to their rescue, and some of the principal criminals were brought off safely to London. It was believed abroad that the murder had been contrived by Henry; that it was his response to the pope, who had made Beaton his legate, and had summoned the council of Trent to confound the protestants.

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But though the cardinal had fallen, the Scots were still defiant. The king's high and conventional theology was as odious to the gospellers as the king's policy was odious to the kirkmen; and Beaton slain, the spiritual leadership of the nation passed after an interregnum to a man of greater fire and genius, but no less bitterly opposed, though from an opposite angle, to the ecclesiastical settlement which Henry had contrived for England, and desired to extend to the Scots. John Knox regarded Solway Moss and the murder at St. Andrews as crowning judgments, and he has depicted them with a vivid display of circumstance in the pages of his bitter and passionate history. Yet if Henry was in the eyes of Knox the instrument of God's purpose, he was also the persecutor of the saints. The Scottish reformation, originating in a popular movement, and assuming from the first the character not merely of a political but also of a dogmatic revolt from Rome, had little in common with the constitutional and economic revolution which had been inaugurated and controlled by the King of England. The introduction of the "English books" into Scotland, the formation of a party pledged to religious reform and to the removal of catholic and French influence was not the decisive factor which the statesmen at Henry's council board imagined it to be; for there still remained two obstacles to the fusion of the nations, the spirit of Scottish political independence, and the spirit of the Scottish reformation.

Ireland, after the destruction of the Leinster Geraldines, had ceased to be a cause of serious political embarrassment. The monasteries and friaries were dissolved; the pope was formally repudiated in an Irish parliament; and that there might be no question as to the quarter to which Irishmen were to carry their allegiance, Henry, on the advice of the deputy and his council, assumed in June, 1541, the titles of King of Ireland and Head of the Irish Church. The French war came and went without adding to the political confusions of the island, and 1,000 Irish kernes, painfully drawn together into the English camp before Boulogne, seemed to imply that the new kingdom would be a source of strength. Henry, however, was well instructed in the practical limits to his power in Ireland. He was aware that the government of the country made an annual drain of some £5,000 upon the home exchequer, and that a systematic scheme

of conquest and colonisation was too costly to attempt. On the advice of Sir Anthony St. Leger, who succeeded Grey in the office of lord deputy, he embarked upon a policy of conciliation. The great chieftains were to be encouraged to come over to England, to hold their lands of the king by knight-service, and to receive English titles, "lest by extreme demands they should revolt to their former beastliness". It was hoped by the present of some peerages, knighthoods, and gold chains to win over the leaders of the septs to the British connexion. At first the experiment seemed to be successful. Desmond acknowledged the royal supremacy, agreed to pay taxes, and was sworn of the council; O'Neill, McWilliam, and O'Brien accepted peerages and parliament robes. But the measure was entirely inadequate to counteract a malady which Henry's religious policy had seriously aggravated. The repudiation of the pope, the destruction of shrines and relics, the blow aimed at the monks and friars wounded the religious sentiment of the Irish people. It is true that some chieftains made no scruple to receive abbey lands, and that it was easy to obtain a signature to deeds abjuring the pope; but this did not affect the attitude of humbler men, who suddenly and without the faintest preparation found that sacred things were to be renounced, and beautiful buildings hacked and spoiled at the command of an alien power. Friars spread over the country instilling abhorrence of the schismatic king and of his tool, Archbishop Browne, a man who would put down pilgrimages and burnt the crozier with which St. Patrick had banished the snakes. In 1542 the first Jesuit mission landed in Ireland. The soil was being prepared for the ministrations of their order. The cause of the Anglican Church, which they had come to contest, was represented by men who knew no word of Irish and had no educational machinery at their command. It is one of the darkest blots on Henry's Irish policy that out of the wealth derived from the desolation of the religious houses not a penny was spent upon the endowment of an Irish school or university.

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IN SEARCH OF UNIFORMITY.

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THE belief that truth is one and absolute, that it receives clear definition through the Church, and that, so defined, it deserves to be protected by the whole power of the state, was part of the intellectual climate of Europe; and to Henry no problem seemed more pressing than the restoration of that religious uniformity which his quarrel with the pope had so violently broken. At last, in May, 1543, the long-promised formulary appeared which was to silence doubts, clear away ambiguities, and "stablish true and uncorrupted doctrines".[1] *The King's Book*, as it was commonly called, owes perhaps to Cranmer its singular grace and perspicuity of style; but though repudiating the pope and the doctrine of indulgences, it is in other essentials a strict and explicit manifesto of catholic orthodoxy. It accepts and explains the sacraments which had been omitted in the Ten Articles, affirms transubstantiation, recommends the invocation of saints, enjoins the celibacy of the clergy. The king took care that he was expressly accorded the right to name, supervise, and depose the bishops. "He has set forth," wrote his council, "a true and perfect doctrine to all his people." That it might be accepted with the less questioning, the parliament of 1543 restricted the reading of the Bible to noblemen, gentlemen, and merchants.

Even a manual sanctioned by king, convocation, and parliament could do nothing to allay the spirit of religious debate which had seized upon the nation. One party wished to go on; another to stand still; a third to go back. To inflame the king's suspicions of a rival's orthodoxy became the chief art of court

[1] Elyot, *The Castel of Health*, ed. 1541, intr. The author desires Henry to define *medical* as well as religious orthodoxy.

politics, and in the council the struggle was carried on with covert but internecine ferocity. Cranmer was the chief mark for catholic, Gardiner for puritan antagonism; the first formidable for his learning, his industry, his powers of expression, his great theological influence with the king; the second for a combination of strict conviction with versatile dexterity. A party in the council, led by Suffolk, tried in vain to send Gardiner to the Tower, and Cranmer triumphantly survived three separate attempts to secure his own downfall. When the prebendaries of Canterbury and some of the gentry of Kent complained of the primate's teaching, a commission was appointed to examine into the charges, but Cranmer was the chief commissioner, and it was not he but his detractors who were made to suffer. A year later Sir John Gostwick, a Bedfordshire member, discovered that to attack the primate in the house of commons was a sure road to the royal displeasure. The third and most dangerous endeavour proceeded from the catholic members of the privy council. "He and his learned men," they argued, "have so infected the whole realm with their unsavoury doctrine that three parts of the people are become abominable heretics. . . . Let him be put in durance, and men will be bold to tell the truth." Henry granted the request, but at midnight summoned Cranmer into the gallery at Whitehall, gave him a ring, and said, "When they are for committing you to the Tower, forthwith appeal from them to me and give them this ring". On the next day Cranmer showed the ring and made his appeal. "Did I not tell you, my lords," cried Russell, "what would come of this matter? I knew right well that the king would never permit my Lord of Canterbury to be imprisoned unless it were for high treason." The sitting broke up in dismay, and when the lords of the council appeared before the king they met with a reception sufficient at least to secure for Cranmer immunity from persecution for the remainder of the reign. CHAP. XVIII.

In December, 1545, Henry made a speech to parliament of great eloquence and impressiveness, urging the nation to religious unity. "I hear," he said, "the special foundation of our religion being charity between man and man, it is so refrigerate as there was never more dissension and lack of love between man and man, the occasions whereof are opinions only and names devised for the continuance of the same. Some are

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called Papists, some Lutherans, and some Anabaptists. I am very sorry to know and hear how unreverently that precious jewel the Word of God is disputed, rhymed, sung, and jangled in every alehouse and tavern. This kind of man is depraved and that kind of man; this ceremony and that ceremony. Of this I am sure, that charity was never so faint among you, and God Himself among Christians was never less reverenced, honoured, and served." The spread of new opinions was alarming. Bishop Bonner, sitting as a commissioner for the Six Articles in Essex, reported on May 15, 1546, that the country was reputed to be more infected with heresy than at any time within the last three or four years.[1] A preacher at Paul's Cross stated, doubtless with some exaggeration, that fasting had been abandoned on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and that good men dare not tell their beads for fear they should be laughed to scorn.[2] But there was nevertheless much in the situation which caused disquietude in protestant circles. Audeley had died in 1544 and was succeeded as lord chancellor by Wriothesley who, after the fall of his patron Cromwell, was understood to have gone over to the catholic party. Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, Lord Poynings, and Dr. Butts, the king's physician, all disappeared in 1545 and left the protestant party the poorer. "As far as true religion is concerned," wrote John Hooper on January 27, 1546, "idolatry is nowhere in greater vigour. The king has destroyed the pope, but not popery."

In the spring and summer of 1546, while Hertford and Lisle were in France, the "whip with the six strings" claimed its last victims. A young lady of gentle birth, the daughter of one Lincolnshire squire and the wife of another, was burnt to death at Smithfield together with three men of humble station. The offence of Anne Askewe was a denial of transubstantiation, and assuming that a fanatical adherence to a theological doctrine proscribed by the law must so be punished, Anne deserved to die. She knew what she was saying, knew whither it would lead her, and gloried in her belief with the steadfast pride of a Moslem heretic. The greatest efforts were made to save a lady so powerfully connected. She was examined by the lord mayor, by the bishop of London's chancellor, by

[1] Record Office, *MS. State Papers, Dom.*, xviii., 46. [2] *Ibid.*, xix., 56.

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Bonner himself, by Gardiner, "the pope's great dancing bear," by the whole privy council. Lisle and Essex, who were of the new learning, urged a retractation. She answered that it was a great shame for them to counsel her contrary to her knowledge. Sir William Paget, "with many glorious words" and in spite of a politic insinuation that confessions might be repudiated, met with the same fate. Anne was primed with Biblical quotations and filled with a wild kind of contempt for those whose armour was less celestial than her own. Was not her obduracy encouraged by the great ladies who favoured the new ideas at court, perhaps even by the queen herself? Catharine Parr had only in the previous year defeated an attempt to send her to the Tower as a heretic; and disclosures might be wrung from Mistress Anne which would serve to mend the broken purpose of the queen's enemies: so Wriothesley, the lord chancellor, and Rich, the solicitor general, went down to her prison, placed her on the rack, and worked the screws. Nothing was discovered out of which political capital could be made; nothing in the long spell of cruel agony could shake the faith of the victim. On July 16 Anne helpless from torture was brought upon a chair to Smithfield and there burnt to death in the presence of many notable persons of the court and the town. No political disclosures escaped her lips; but she was condemned to listen to a sermon from Shaxton, who had not a week before recanted the opinions of the woman whose fate he was too cowardly to share. She left behind her a narrative of her examination and sufferings, together with a ballad or hymn written in Newgate, and these memorials, published with a violent commentary by John Bale in January, 1547, have secured to her a permanent place in protestant hagiology.

One by one the catholic plots had failed, and when Hertford and Lisle were released from their service in the war, the position of the new learning became stronger at court. That the king, so long as he preserved his powers, would remain master of the situation was undoubted; but he was seriously indisposed in March, again in July, again in October, and despite all efforts at concealment, his appearance told the tale. As his grasp upon the situation weakened, the struggle for the helm of state became more severe. Early in November, 1546, Lisle struck Gardiner in full council, and was sent into

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temporary banishment. On November 10 Odet de Selve, the French ambassador, reports that the lord mayor of London and the justices of the peace had been charged to make secret inquiries into an alleged conspiracy of great personages.[1] The report may have been unfounded, but rumours of plot and counterplot filled the town, and the next month brought with it intelligence which must have outpassed the wildest and most sensational surmises. On December 12, 1546, Norfolk and Surrey were cast into the Tower, the father the first soldier, the son the first poet in the realm.

The imprisonment of the two Howards was a political act, covered in accordance with precedent by judicial pretexts, and prompted by the fear that they were designing to seize the helm of state upon the king's death.[2] Surrey was a brilliant, fiery, unbalanced youth, whose indiscretions gave an opening to the enemy. Vain of his royal origin, he had caused to be emblazoned upon a panel in his private chamber at Kenninghall an escutcheon containing, among other emblems, the leopards of England and the arms ascribed by an erroneous tradition to Edward the Confessor. He had also imparted his opinion to one George Blage, that the proper regent of the kingdom on the death of King Henry would be his own father, the premier duke of England, a view which Blage, being of the Lutheran persuasion, proceeded to dispute. The quarrel between Blage and Surrey became known; and Surrey, casting discretion to the winds, made no secret of his swaggering ambitions, how his father should become the regent, and how then he would settle accounts with friend and foe. In self-defence the menaced interests coalesced together and planned the ruin of the house of Howard. Sir Richard Southwell, a catholic, an intimate of the Howard family, but one of Cromwell's men, was put up to denounce the escutcheon at Kenninghall, and propounded to the council the doctrine that the heraldic devices indicated a claim to succeed to the throne. Confronted with his accuser on December 2, Surrey lost his head, burst into wild invectives, and challenged Southwell to personal combat then and there. Accuser and accused were placed in custody until fresh evidence had been collected. Stories of the most futile de-

[1] Odet de Selve, *Correspondance*, p. 55.
[2] *Cal. State Papers, Spain*, viii., 531.

scription were brought to the council; how Surrey had foreign friends, kept an Italian fool, had an old servant of Cardinal Pole in his employ, dressed in a foreign manner, had designed to make his sister, the Duchess of Richmond, the king's mistress.[1] But flimsy as these allegations were, they were sufficient. The council released Southwell, despatched a commission to Kenninghall, and after placing Norfolk and Surrey in the Tower, ordered criminal proceedings to be taken against them. The Duchess of Richmond, inflamed by rancour against her brother, abounded in improbable denunciations; the Countess of Surrey, who might have defended her husband, was not even examined. It came out that the Garter king had advised Surrey that he was not entitled to bear King Edward's arms, but that he had said openly to the council of Boulogne that he was entitled to bear them. A Norwich grand jury declared on January 7, 1547, that Surrey and his father were guilty of high treason, the first for usurping the arms of the Confessor, only to be borne by the heir to the throne, the second for failing to reveal this criminal act.

On January 13 the young soldier poet was brought into the Guildhall to be tried for his life. Bench and jury were alike packed; but the people who thronged the hall and the streets did not conceal their sympathy for the prisoner. His impetuosity, his poetic gifts, his high birth, his renown in war, added to the freshly bruited news of attempts to escape from the Tower, made him the hero of the moment. His defence was marked by the insolent, reckless pride of the old aristocracy. To Secretary Paget, whose father had been a constable, he called out: "Thou, Catchpole, what hast thou to do with it? Thou hadst better hold thy tongue, for the kingdom has never been well since the king put mean creatures like thee in the government." For two hours he debated thus; and then the jury withdrew. Hour after hour passed, and there was no sign of agreement. Disquieted by the uncertainty of the issue, Paget repaired to the king, and then entered the jury-room with a message. "It is thought," wrote a Spaniard who was in London, and most probably in the Guildhall on this after-

[1] For the defence it was urged that Surrey was not on sufficiently good terms with his sister to have proposed for her so honourable a position (Record Office, *State Papers, Dom.*, xix., 44).

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noon, "that when Paget came back from the king he brought an order for condemnation." However this may be, guilty was the verdict, death or mutilation the sentence. "I know," said the earl, in a last haughty outburst, "that the king wants to get rid of the noble blood round him, and to employ none but low people." Such indeed has been the classical device of all tyrannies.[1]

Surrey was beheaded on Tower Hill on the 19th; his father, who had pleaded guilty and astutely petitioned that his estates might be bestowed upon Prince Edward, was reserved for the process of a parliamentary attainder equally deadly, but slower and more dignified. The bill was introduced on the 18th and passed on the 24th. "No man present at the sittings," reported Chapuys, "dare for his life's sake open his mouth or say a word without watching the will of the king or his council."[2] Then on Thursday, the 27th, the chancellor summoned the lords and commons and gave the royal assent by commission to the act contrived for the destruction of the oldest soldier of the crown. The prisoner was condemned to suffer on the next morning, but before the next morning came, the king was dead. Henry's condition had long been serious, but as late as January 13 he had been well enough to grant an audience at Westminster. Then ensued a period of silence, ominous of coming change, and jealously guarded until Hertford and his party should have completed their dispositions. On Monday, the 31st, Wriothesley announced with tears to the parliament that the king was dead. On that day the French ambassador wrote: "The thing is still kept so secret that hardly any one dares open his mouth to speak of it, and it is not yet certainly known when the death took place".[3] It had taken place at the Palace of Westminster in the early morning of the 28th, just in time to save the head of the Duke of Norfolk. The enemies of the old learning had

[1] *Chronicle of King Henry VIII.*, ed. Hume, c. lxiv.; Wriothesley, *Chronicle*, p. 177. Surrey's denunciation of the new men receives support from Sir Edmund Knyvet's deposition at the trial (*State Papers, Dom.*, xix., 43). A curious story is told in Stowe MS., 396, f. 8, to the effect that he was acquitted of the heraldic charges, and condemned for "conspiracy of murder".

[2] *Cal. State Papers, Spain*, viii., 557.

[3] Odet de Selve, *Correspondance*, p. 95.

triumphed; and they rightly felt that it would be impolitic to stain their victory and the opening reign by an act of blood. CHAP. XVIII.

The fiery sun sank wrathfully below a wild horizon. War had broken out between the emperor and the protestants, and the Spanish soldiery with cries of "Luther, Luther!" on their lips were carrying flame and sword through Germany.[1] In England, however, the reformation was for the moment safe. The whole of the Bible and much that is liturgical, the creed, the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, the forms of the bidding prayer had been authoritatively published in English. A primer of devotions issued from Grafton's press in 1545, with a royal injunction and a royal preface, contains the musical litany, which is the supreme monument of Cranmer's felicity and one of the chief beauties of the Anglican prayer-book. A design was attributed to Hertford of depriving the bishops of their territorial revenues and making them pensioners; but though this would have weakened the bishops, it would not suit the great nobles who derived handsome salaries as stewards of episcopal lands.[2] Cranmer was still at the head of the Church, his active brain occupied with liturgical change; and a scheme for converting the mass into the communion and for extirpating the ceremonies of creeping to the cross, covering images in Lent, and ringing bells at All Hallows was only awaiting the royal assent. The heir to the throne, a boy of nine, had been educated by men of the new school, nor were the executors appointed to carry out the king's will disinclined for the most part to promote the cause of the new learning. The star of the old nobility had paled; the men who sat at the council board or thronged the diplomatic service were with few exceptions laymen of humble origin, active talents, and reforming tendencies. Splendid abilities had been enlisted in the public service; the devotion to the crown was boundless; the policy of the state was largely conceived, and resolutely carried out. By ceaseless iterations, and by the use of all the material and intellectual resources at his hand, Henry had deleted the papacy from the national system and caused himself to be accepted as the head of a national Church. The revolution had been carried out with brutality, with greed; it was stained by some

[1] Record Office, *State Papers*, CC, 133. [2] *Cal. State Papers, Spain*, viii., 556.

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acts of hideous cruelty; it was the cause of a nameless mass of destitution and suffering. Great opportunities were missed; the endowment of education, the establishment of a good system of prisons, the equalising of ecclesiastical revenues, the preservation of some shelter in religious and charitable endowments for the lives and activities of unmarried women. The industry of John Leland, fine scholar though he was, could not repair the loss occasioned by the destruction of monastic libraries; and in the last year of a reign which witnessed an unparalleled profusion of ecclesiastical wealth, Dr. Cox, the tutor of Prince Edward, calculates the revenues of the university of Oxford at £5 and those of the university of Cambridge at £50.[1]

Yet the permanence of Henry's work was rooted in the iconoclasm which the sentimental romance and the facile equity of subsequent ages is so ready to condemn. The courtiers, officials, and squires acquiesced, not without reluctance, in the dissolution of the monasteries because they received a share in the plunder. Would they have acquiesced if it had been explained to them that those familiar and beautiful fabrics, part of the old England into which they were born, were to be hacked to pieces to endow scholars and teachers at the universities, to found grammar schools for the sons of yeomen, or to provide food, lodging, and raiment for the poor, the halt, and the blind? In a better age the wealth of the monasteries would have been better bestowed; but even in that age all was not senselessly squandered. Large gifts were indeed made, as for instance to Suffolk, Audeley, Cromwell, and Norfolk, but the gifts might reasonably be regarded as payment for public services, and the sales and leases greatly preponderated over the gifts. Selling for the most part at twenty years' purchase and at a value slightly higher than that of the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, the crown received a good market price for the land.[2]

Henry at least understood his own age. Gross, cruel, crafty, hypocritical, avaricious, he was nevertheless a great ruler of men. His grasp of affairs was firm and comprehensive; his devotion to public duty was, at least after Wolsey's fall, constant and sustained by a high and kingly sense of his own

[1] Record Office, *State Papers, Dom.*, xix., 4. [2] Appendix II.

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virtues and responsibilities. Before the judgment seat of his watchful, exacting, and imperious conscience, he at least was never found wanting. The fragments of his eloquence which have been preserved are superb; his state papers are rich with the glow of a powerful and impetuous intellect. Despite violent oscillations of mood he saw the large objects of policy with a certain steadfast intensity, the preservation of the dynasty, the unity of the state, the subjection of Scotland. In a sense he may be said to have created the royal navy, founding a guild, now known as Trinity House, for the supply of trained pilots, organising in 1546 the first regular navy board, and leaving at his death a fleet of seventy-one vessels. His government, which depreciated the coinage, flogged vagabonds, broke up institutions which had provided relief to the poor, burned heretics at the stake, stamped out devotion to the old order with ruthless cruelty in many a Yorkshire and Lancashire village, was yet a government to which in all the ordinary concerns of life lowly men might look for even-handed justice; a despotism, furnished with an apparatus of resonant and edifying apologies, but not without enlightenment, conscience, virtue. "If it happen," ran the instructions issued to the council of the north in 1545, "that any man, of what degree so ever he be, shall demand surety of peace and justice against any great lord of the country, the said president shall grant the petition of the poorest man against the richest and greatest lord, whether he be of his council or no, as he would grant, being lawfully asked of men of the meanest sort, degree, and haviour."[1] By protecting equality a tyrant may blind his subjects and redeem half his crimes.

A spirit of triumphant insolence, as of a rude and vigorous nation suddenly entering into the consciousness of large powers and wide horizons, distinguishes the political literature of this reign. The patriotism of England mounted fast and high under the proudest ruler in Europe. New prospects opened out in every direction: Holbein showed the glory of painting, Wyatt and Surrey recovered the secret of the lyric, an obscure London merchant pressed upon his sovereign the advantage of piercing the North-West passage to the Indies. The multi-

[1] *State Papers*, v., 409.

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farious energies of his people found in Henry a leader of wide aptitude and congenial force. Called to govern a country which had been long depressed by the perplexities of civil strife, he left behind him a body of patriotic sentiment, so wholesome and buoyant, that vanquishing after a brief struggle the poison of religious discord, it attained the magnificent development of the Elizabethan age. —

APPENDIX I.

ON AUTHORITIES.

The Reign of Henry VII.: Documentary Authorities.[1]—The *Statutes of the Realm* (1816) contain the public and private acts passed during the reign, and a study of the parchment and erasures of the original rolls in the Record Office and the Victoria Tower, Westminster, supplies some evidence as to amendments. The *Rolls of Parliament*, vi., contain the petitions and pleas up to 1503; RYMER'S *Fœdera*, xii.-xiv. (London, 1741), and J. DUMONT'S *Corps universel diplomatique du droit des gens*, iii., 2, and iv., 1, give the treaties; but far the most important source of diplomatic information is contained in the reports of the Spanish and Venetian envoys resident at the English court. These are calendared respectively in the *Calendar of State Papers, Spain*, i., 1485-1509 (ed. G. A. Bergenroth, 1862), and the *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, i., 1202-1509 (ed. R. Brown, 1864). Hardly less indispensable are the *Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Reigns of Richard III. and Henry VII.* (ed. J. Gairdner, Rolls Ser.) and the letters printed by Sir H. ELLIS, *Original Letters* (1st ser., i.; 2nd ser., i.; 3rd ser., i., ii.). Three letters of Henry VII. are printed in the *Christ Church Letters* (ed. J. B. Sheppard, Camden Soc., 1877). W. CAMPBELL'S *Materials for the History of the Reign of Henry VII.* (2 vols. covering the period 1485-90) contains a mass of material—royal charters, privy seal writs, patent rolls, close rolls, etc.—more valuable for topography and biography than for large political affairs; and the same remark applies to the *Calendar of the Inquisitions post mortem*, Henry VII., i. (1898). Campbell's volumes throw some light upon prices, the gifts of land made by the king, and the expenditure of the court. The principal evidence, however, as to the private expenditure and tastes of the king is afforded by S. BENTLEY'S *Excerpta*

[1] Full bibliographies have been published for the reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. respectively by W. BUSCH, *England under the Tudors* (vol. i., pp. 424-34), and by J. GAIRDNER, *Cambridge Modern History* (vol. i., pp. 770-72, and vol. ii., pp. 789-94).

APP. I. *Historica* (London, 1833). For the state trials of this and the succeeding reign recourse must be had to the *Baga de Secretis* in Report III., Appendix ii., of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records, a jejune but accurate record.

Contemporary Histories and Chronicles.—The most important is POLYDORE VERGIL'S *Historia Anglica*, the twenty-sixth book of which prolix work is devoted to the reign of Henry VII. Coming to England in 1502, Vergil was, during the last six years of the reign, close to the events which he describes. He seems to have kept a diary of events; he had access to good authorities and used them with discretion, and though he had little or no acquaintance with constitutional forms, he is not without independence of judgment and can draw a character. The last book (xxvii.), devoted to the early years of the reign of Henry VIII., is vitiated by a violent detestation of Wolsey, who threw the author into prison. The work was printed in 1534 and again in 1546, and is the chief source from which succeeding writers have drawn their knowledge of Henry VII.'s reign. Bernard André, of Toulouse, historiographer and poet laureate to Henry VII., appears to have come over to England with the king. He served as tutor to Prince Arthur for four years, and was required to celebrate the chief public events of the time in French and Latin verse. His *De vita et gestis Henrici Septimi* and two fragments of his *Annals* for 1504-5 and 1508 respectively are published by J. GAIRDNER, *Memorials of Henry VII.* (Rolls Series). André was certainly blind and probably indolent. His work is full of confusion, myth, and hollow rhetoric; his notes on 1508 are probably the most valuable part of it. A few fragments of information may also be gleaned from the *Chronicle of Calais* (ed. J. G. Nichols, Camden Soc., 1846), and from the jejune City chronicles. These are ARNOLD'S *Chronicle* (ed. Douce, 1811); C. WRIOTHESLEY'S *Chronicle* (based on Arnold, ed. W. D. Hamilton, Camden Soc., 1875); *The Chronicle of the Grey Friars* (based on Arnold till 1503, ed. J. G. Nichols, Camden Soc., 1852); R. FABYAN, *Chronicle* (ed. H. Ellis); STOW'S *Chronicles of England* (first issued in 1580), and a City Chronicle (Brit. Mus., Cotton, Vitellius A. xvi.), ed. C. L. Kingsford, *Chronicles of London*, Oxford, 1905 (with an excellent introduction settling the mutual relations of the London chronicles). These chronicles are chiefly valuable as indicating the survival of Lollardy in London.

The ecclesiastical history of the reign is illustrated by WILKINS, *Concilia Magnæ Britanniæ*, iii.; E. A. BATTEN, *The Register of Richard Fox* (1889); A. JESSOPP, *The Visitations of the Diocese of Norwich*

(Camden Soc., 1888); A. F. LEACH, *Visitations and Memorials of Southwell Minster*, 1891; *Report on the Convocation Books at Wells* (Hist. MSS. Commission, Rep. i., 107); and JOHN FOXE, *Acts and Monuments*, the last particularly valuable for the survival of Lollardy. For social history see the *Plumpton Correspondence* (ed. T. Stapleton, Camden Soc., 1839); the *Paston Letters*, vi. (ed. J. Gairdner, 1904), and more especially the *Italian Relation of England* (ed. C. A. Sneyd, Camden Soc., 1847), a curious and brilliant description. EDMUND DUDLEY'S *Tree of Commonwealth* (written in 1509, ed. 1859) is an important treatise by one of Henry's chief ministers, and specially valuable for its reflections on the social and religious state of the country. The *Rutland Papers* (ed. W. Jordan, Camden Soc., 1842) contains a description of the preparations made for Henry VII.'s coronation. A few royal letters may be found in *Hist. MSS. Commission*, Rep. xii., vol. i., 1888. LELAND'S *Collectanea*, iv., pp. 179-309, contains accounts of festivities; and the *Pilgrimage of Sir Richard Guylforde to the Holy Land A.D. 1506* (ed. Sir H. Ellis, Camden Soc.) illustrates the connexion between the English and Italian nobility of the period. For some information as to roads see *Report on the Shrewsbury Records* (Hist. MSS. Commission, xlix., 1899), and on parliamentary expenses the *Reports on the Southampton and Reading MSS.* (*ibid.*, xi., pt. 3, p. 17; pt. 7, p. 177). APP. I.

Secondary Authorities.—Of these the most important is FRANCIS BACON, whose *History of Henry VII.*, written very rapidly just after his fall, June to October, 1621, is a classic. He sometimes makes mistakes by following third-hand sources, as Speed, who follows André (see a curious example in GAIRDNER'S *Memorials*, intr., p. xxvi.), and some of his surmises have been corrected in the light of the Calendars. A few fragments of oral tradition are embedded in his work, and it is possible that his friend, Sir Robert Cotton, may have supplied him with materials now inaccessible. This, however, is not made apparent. "In almost every case," says Dr. Busch, who has examined the work sentence by sentence, "we can refer to the original authorities which formed the basis for Bacon's statements, and find that, with unimportant exceptions, we possess all these authorities themselves." In fact the chief authority used by Bacon is Polydore Vergil, as reproduced by Hall. Bacon's merit does not, therefore, consist in the novelty of his facts, nor in his fidelity to strict historical canons, but in his sagacity, his humour, his breadth and keenness of vision, and the brilliancy of his style. All subsequent histories (see ELLIS and SPEDDING, *Bacon's Works*, vol. vi., intr.) have been written in the light of his masterly interpretation.

APP. I. Of modern books the most elaborate is W. BUSCH, *England under the Tudors* (Stuttgart, 1892; tr. A. M. Todd, 1895). This volume contains a thorough examination of the political and economic aspects of the reign, a full bibliography, and a valuable criticism of the original authorities. J. GAIRDNER, *Henry the Seventh* (*Twelve English Statesmen Series*, 1889), and his story of Perkin Warbeck published as an appendix to his *History of Richard III.* (1898), are also authoritative. A masterly summary of this and the succeeding reign is given in Bishop STUBBS's *Seventeen Lectures* (Oxford, 1886). For the literary movement, F. SEEBOHM, *Oxford Reformers* (3rd ed., 1877); J. H. LUPTON, *Life of Dean Colet* (1887) and *Colet's Influence on the Reformation* (1893); CAROLINE A. HASTED, *Life of Margaret Beaufort* (1845); J. B. MULLINGER, *The University of Cambridge from the Earliest Times to the Royal Injunctions of 1535*, vol. i.; J. A. FROUDE, *Life and Letters of Erasmus* (1894); F. M. NICHOLS, *Epistles of Erasmus*, a learned and scholarly book (1901-4); F. A. GASQUET, *The Eve of the Reformation* (1900), and *Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia*, ii., 1906 (Royal Hist. Soc., 3rd ser., vol. x.); M. BURROWS (Oxford Hist. Soc., *Life of Grocyn* in *Collectanea*, ii., 319-80, 1890); and W. J. COURTHOPE, *History of English Poetry*, vol. i. (1895).

For the foreign relations perhaps the most useful works will be found to be: ZURITA, *Anales de la corona de Aragon* (7 vols., Saragossa, 1610); J. MOLINET, *Chroniques* (ed. Buchon, 5 vols., Paris, 1827); H. ULMANN, *Kaiser Maximilian I.* (2 vols., Stuttgart, 1884, 1891); R. MAULDE DE LA CLAVIÈRE, *Histoire de Louis XII.* (2 vols., Paris, 1890); A. DUPUY, *Histoire de la réunion de la Bretaigne à la France* (2 vols., Paris, 1880); K. WENZELBURGER, *Geschichte der Niederlande* (2 vols., Gotha, 1879-86).

The Reign of Henry VIII.: Documentary Authorities.—Among these two great collections hold a pre-eminent place, the eleven volumes of selected *State Papers* (Record Commission, 1830-52) and the *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic* (i.-iv., ed. J. S. Brewer, 1862-76; v.-xiii., ed. J. Gairdner, 1880-93; xiv.-xix., ed. J. Gairdner and R. H. Brodie, 1894-1905), which carry the story down to the end of 1544, and will be continued to the end of the reign.[1] In scope and arrangement these two collections differ in three re-

[1] In dealing with the unpublished material subsequent to 1544 the author has been greatly helped by the kindness of Mr. Brodie. The references in this volume to the *Letters and Papers* are to the numbers of the documents, not to the pages.

spects. The *Letters and Papers* are arranged in chronological order; the *State Papers* according to subject (vol. i., domestic correspondence; vols. ii.-iii., correspondence relating to Ireland; vols. iv.-v., correspondence relating to Scotland; vols. vii.-xi., correspondence between England and other courts). Again, while the *State Papers* are printed *in extenso*, the *Letters and Papers* are abridged, those passages only being cited in full which appear to the editors to be of special interest. Thirdly, while the *State Papers* are solely state papers, the later collection embraces every description of authentic material relating to the reign from every documentary source, whether in the Record Office or elsewhere, and gives to the student almost all the evidence and bibliography which he requires (*Letters and Papers*, vol. i., pref. i.-xviii.). Two other calendars, the *Spanish State Papers*, ii.-xii. (ed. G. A. Bergenroth and P. de Gayangos), the *Venetian State Papers*, iii.-v. (ed. R. Brown), are also of peculiar value; the Venetian papers particularly for the earlier, the Spanish papers for the later years of the reign. After 1530 the Venetian correspondence is epitomised in the *Letters and Papers*. While the *Letters and Papers* serve as a general introduction to the historical literature of the reign, the student will occasionally find it necessary to consult the full text of the documents which he there reads in an abridged form. He will therefore have recourse to such collections as STRYPE'S *Ecclesiastical Memorials;* BURNET'S *History of the Reformation* (ed. Pocock, 1865); N. POCOCK'S *Records of the Reformation* (2 vols., Oxford, 1870); GIUSTINIAN'S *Despatches;* J. KAULEK, *Correspondance politique de MM. de Castillon et Marillac;* R. B. MERRIMAN, *Life and Letters of Thomas Cromwell;* PORCACCI, *Lettere de tredici Huomini illustri; Henry VIII.'s Love Letters to Anne Boleyn* (Harleian Misc., iii., pp. 47-60, or ed. Crapelet); or the *Ambassades en Angleterre de Jean du Bellay* (ed. V. L. Bourilly and P. de Vaissière), the first volume of which, covering the period September, 1527, to February, 1529, has recently (1905) seen the light. There are, in addition, two important publications, the first of which came too late for the Calendar, while the second belongs to a period which has not yet been reached: S. EHSES, *Römische Dokumente zur Geschichte der Ehescheidung Heinrichs VIII.* (Paderborn, 1893) throws some new light on the divorce question, and has been admirably discussed by J. Gairdner in the *English Historical Review* (xi., 673-702, and xii., 1-16 and 237-53), and G. LEFÈVRE-PONTALIS, *Correspondance politique d'Odet de Selve* (Paris, 1888) which illustrates English politics in the last year of the reign. While the editors of the *Letters and Papers* draw upon the *Reports of the Historical MSS. Commission*, one volume of which,

APP. I. the *Calendar of the MSS. of the Marquis of Salisbury* (pt. i., 1888), is particularly valuable for this reign, there are many interesting details scattered about the *Reports* which do not find their way into the great collection: in particular the student of parliamentary and municipal history has much to glean from them.

The *Journals of the House of Lords* (vol. i.) contain (*a*) the Rolls of Parliament from 1513 to 1533 and (*b*) the Lords' Journals from 1509 to 1513 and from 1533 to 1547. It will be observed that there is a lacuna at a very critical period. Moreover the journals are very jejune, containing lists of the peers present, of the bills discussed and passed, but no reports of debates or division lists. As there are no journals of the House of Commons, the information with regard to proceedings in parliament must be gleaned from casual sources, such as *Cromwell's Letters*, FOXE'S *Acts and Monuments*, ROPER'S *More*, HALL'S *Chronicle*, and the correspondence of foreign ambassadors like Chapuys or Castillon. For the history of the privy council we have two collections (both noted in *Letters and Papers*). Sir H. NICOLAS, *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council*, vii., covering the period August 10, 1540, to April 8, 1542, and prefaced by an excellent dissertation on the functions and composition of the council, and the *Acts of the Privy Council*, i. (ed. J. R. Dasent), which extend from April 22, 1542, to January 26, 1547. Other phases of the judicial work of the government receive illustration in I. S. LEADAM'S *Select Cases in the Star Chamber* and *Select Cases in the Court of Requests*, both volumes published by the Selden Society.

Chronicles.—Edward Hall (1498?-1547), of Eton, King's College, Cambridge, and Gray's Inn, appointed common serjeant of the City of London in 1532, a judge of the sheriff's court in 1540, and elected member for Bridgnorth in 1542, is the most important of the contemporary chroniclers. His *Union of the Two Noble and Illustrate Families of Lancaster and York* was published in 1542 by Berthelet (no complete copy survives of this edition), republished by Grafton in 1548 and 1550, and then again by Ellis in 1809. Finally, that portion of the chronicle which concerns Henry VIII. has been edited with a pleasant introduction by C. Whibley (2 vols., 1904). Hall was a robust protestant Londoner, an ardent royalist, a patriot, a priest-hater, a lover of gorgeous sights and sounds, a creature of most illuminating limitations. With him the king can do no wrong, even when he causes the Six Articles to be accepted by parliament. Yet, in spite of his strong prejudices, Hall is an accurate man (see NICOLAS, *Ordinances of the Privy Council*, Intr., lxvi.-vii.); but the quality of his mind is as important as the accuracy of his facts.

He reflects the opinion of protestant London as no other writer does, and enables us to enter into its spirit. Owing to the accident that the reports of the imperial ambassadors at the English court have been preserved, as well as the correspondence of Cromwell's spies and the inquiries undertaken after the Pilgrimage of Grace, the student may easily minimise the protestant feeling in the country. To this tendency Hall supplies a corrective. For the reign of Henry VII. his chronicle is of some, though not of primary, value, since it is mainly an English transcript of Vergil; but for Henry VIII. it is of the first importance. In comparison with Hall, the other contemporary chroniclers, though often contributing useful scraps of information, are tame and jejune. They are *The Chronicle of the Grey Friars* (ed. J. G. Nichols, Camden Soc., 1859); *The Chronicle of Calais* (ed. J. G. Nichols, Camden Soc., 1846); *The Chronicles of Fabyan* (ed. Ellis, 1811) and Stow (1615); the very brief *London Chronicle* (ed. C. Hopper, Camden Miscellany, vol. iv., 1859); *The Chronicle of C. Wriothesley* (ed. W. D. Hamilton, Camden Soc., 1875), most of which have been touched on in connexion with the previous reign. Of these Wriothesley is the most useful, especially for the later years of the king's life. The author was born in 1508, appointed Windsor herald in 1534, and was cousin of Baron Wriothesley, who became lord chancellor in 1544. His chronicle becomes independent after 1518, and full after 1532. A curious and confused Spanish chronicle, translated by M. A. S. Hume (1889), and written by a Spaniard who was in England during the concluding period of the reign, contributes a good deal of doubtful gossip, a number of unquestioned falsehoods, and probably some fragments of truth. The *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, by R. HOLINSHED (1st ed., 1577; 2nd ed., 1587), belong to a different category. Though not strictly contemporary, they were compiled at a date when the feelings and impressions of the reign were not yet effaced. The *Irish Chronicle*, which for 1509-47 is written by RICHARD STONYHURST, a native of Dublin, is peculiarly valuable, and is the main literary authority for the Irish side of the story. It is based upon a brief chronicle written by Edmund Campion, upon "records and rolls divers," and also, doubtless, upon oral tradition. It is fresh, picturesque, brilliant, full of humour and vivacity. The English chronicle written by Holinshed himself is based upon wide research, but contains nothing of value which cannot be found in strictly contemporary sources.

For the intellectual and religious movements of the reign the chief original authorities are the works of Sir THOMAS MORE (*English Works*, 1557; *Latin Works*, 1563, 1565, 1566, 1589) and CHRISTOPHER ST.

APP. I. GERMAIN, *A treatise concernynge the division betwene the spiritualtie and temporaltie* (Berthelet, 1531 ?) and *Salem and Bizance* (Berthelet, 1533, 1534); CARDINAL POLE, *Epistolæ* (ed. Quirini, Brescia, 1744-57), and ERASMUS, *Epistolæ* (ed. London, 1642, Leclerc, 1703, and F. M. Nichols, 1901-4); *The Sermons of Latimer* (Parker Soc., 1844); *The Sermons and Remains of Latimer* (Parker Soc., 1845); *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer* (ed. J. E. Cox, Parker Soc., 1846); *Remains of Thomas Cranmer* (ed. H. Jenkyns, 1833); and *Narratives of the Reformation* (ed. J. G. Nichols, Camden Soc., 1859). The official records of convocation are to be found in WILKINS'S *Concilia*, iii. A great mass of information illustrating the history of the persecutions and the lives of the early protestants is to be found in FOXE'S *Acts and Monuments*, iv. and v., ed. Cattley and Townsend (popularly known as "The Book of Martyrs"). Foxe (1516-87) was intimate with Latimer and Tyndale, and issued the first draft of his vivid and powerful book as early as 1554. His authority has been often impugned, and he has been convicted of a good many errors and misrepresentations (*cf.* S. R. MAITLAND, *Essays on Subjects connected with the Reformation in England*, 1849, and J. GAIRDNER, *History of the English Church in the Sixteenth Century*, c. iv.). He was a passionate and earnest protestant, who had given up an Oxford fellowship on religious grounds, and preferred exile to conformity in the reign of Mary. He hates popery, pursues Gardiner throughout his career with special vehemence as the chieftain of the papal party, and writes an eloquent eulogy on Cromwell. He was even capable of forgetting the date of the act of Six Articles. Nevertheless, though he requires control, Foxe cannot be ignored. He collected and printed numerous documents from the bishops' registers of London, Lincoln, Canterbury, and St. Andrews; he drew first-hand information from eye-witnesses, and though he frequently reports untested gossip, he is often careful to mention his authority. In view of the enormous mass of facts contained in his monumental work, the number of proved errors, for this period at least, is slight. Foxe was too confident in the strength of his own case to indulge in deliberate deception, and though his ideas of evidence, when tried by modern standards, are lax they are above the ordinary level of his age. His interpretation may often be overthrown by the facts alleged in support of it.

For Wolsey and the early diplomacy of the reign there is the contemporary Life, by the cardinal's secretary, G. CAVENDISH (written 1557, published 1815, and frequently since), the charming tribute of a trustful adorer, and the able but too eulogistic biography by Bishop

CREIGHTON (*Twelve English Statesmen Series*, London, 1888), which appears to be based on the estimate given by J. S. Brewer in the prefaces to the early volumes of the *Letters and Papers*. W. BUSCH, *Drei Jahre englischer Vermittlungspolitik* (1518-21, Bonn, 1884) and *Cardinal Wolsey und die 'english-kaiserliche Allianz*, 1522-25 (Bonn, 1886), and G. JACQUETON, *La Politique extérieure de Louise de Savoie* (Paris, 1892), may also be consulted. Wolsey's ecclesiastical work has been dealt with by E. L. TAUNTON, *Thomas Wolsey, Legate and Reformer* (1902). APP. I.

A large literature, the most important part of which has already been indicated, centres round the divorce. NICOLAS HARPSFIELD (b. 1519; fellow of New College, 1535) wrote in 1556, when Archdeacon of Canterbury, a *Treatise on the Pretended Divorce between Henry VIII. and Catharine of Aragon* (ed. Pocock, Camden Soc., 1878), which is conscientious and valuable. He thinks it "most credible" that Wolsey was the first author of the divorce. In a *Life of Sir Thomas More*, however (Harl. MS., 6253; partly ed. by Lord Acton for the Philobiblon Soc., 1877), he is more positive. NICHOLAS SANDERS (1530 ? -81), likewise a catholic controversialist, published a work entitled *De origine ac progressu schismatis Anglicani* (Cologne, 1585; tr. Lewis, 1877), which concentrates all the papalist slanders of his time. Some anecdotes related by the author may, however, be true, and the book is interesting as being the retrospect of a bitter papalist in exile. In modern times the most important contribution (always excepting the *Letters and Papers*) to the story has been made by P. FRIEDMANN, whose *Anne Boleyn*, 2 vols. (1884), marks an epoch. Reference may also be made to Lord Acton's masterly article in the *Quarterly Review*, cxliii., pp. 1-51, and to W. BUSCH in *Historisches Taschenbuch* (6te Folge, viii., pp. 273-327, and ix., pp. 39-114). While the early phases of the protestant movement are detailed in all the histories of the Church, it is well also to consult the lives of Cranmer, Crome, Coverdale, Latimer, Lambert, Tyndale, Bilney, Frith, and Anne Askewe in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. A scholarly *Life of Cranmer*, by A. F. POLLARD (New York and London, 1904), concentrates all the available sources of information. The lives of Tyndale and Latimer have been well written by R. DEMAUS (*Latimer*, new ed., 1881; *Tyndale*, revised ed., 1886); while H. E. JACOBS has published a trustworthy book, mainly on the doctrinal side, entitled *The Lutheran Movement in England* (Philadelphia, 1890). For another aspect B. F. WESTCOTT, *History of the English Bible* (London, 1868; new ed. by W. A. Wright, 1905), should be consulted.

APP. I. The history of the catholic martyrs is chiefly contained in their biographies. The exquisite little *Biography of Sir Thomas More*, by W. ROPER, his son-in-law (1st ed., Paris, 1626, frequently reprinted); CRESACRE MORE'S *Life and Death of Sir T. More* (ed. J. Hunter, London, 1828); and T. STAPLETON'S *Tres Thomæ* (Cologne, 1612) are the primary authorities for the outward circumstances of More's life. Modern biographies are numerous. The best are those of W. H. Hutton (Anglican) and T. E. Bridgett (Roman). For Bishop Fisher we have the lives by John Lewis (1855), Van Ortroy (Brussels, 1893), and T. Bridgett (1888). The *Historia aliquot martyrum*, by M. CHAUNCY (ed. V. M. Doreau, London, 1888), and the *Life of Jane Dormer, Duchess of Feria*, by H. CLIFFORD (ed. J. Stevenson), relate the virtues and trials of the Carthusians. V. M. DOREAU, *Henry VIII. et les martyrs de la Chartreuse de Londres* (Paris, 1890), adds the results of modern research. The best life of Cardinal Pole is that by A. ZIMMERMANN, *Kardinal Pole, sein Leben und seine Schriften* (Regensburg, 1893). While all the documents bearing on the dissolution of the monasteries have been calendared in the *Letters and Papers*, special reference may be made to T. WRIGHT'S *Suppression of the Monasteries* (Camden Soc., 1843). Far the best modern treatise on the subject is F. A. GASQUET'S *Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries*, 2 vols. (London, 1888; revised popular edition in one volume, 1899), a very learned and careful work, written from the Romanist standpoint.

For the social and commercial history of this and the preceding reign the best treatises are G. SCHANZ, *Englische Handelspolitik gegen Ende des Mittelalters* (2 vols., Leipzig, 1881); W. CUNNINGHAM, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, i. (Cambridge, 5th ed., 1905); I. S. LEADAM, *The Domesday of Inclosures* (Royal Hist. Soc., 1897); E. P. CHEYNEY, *Social Changes in England in the Sixteenth Century* (Boston, 1895). Perhaps the most interesting contemporary light is afforded by the three treatises published by R. Pauli (vol. xxii. of *Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, 1878); SKELTON, *Poetical Works* (ed. Dyce, 1843); F. J. FURNIVALL, *Ballads from MSS.* (Ballad Soc., 1868-72), and by the publications of the Early English Text Society for 1871 and 1878.

A finished study by E. BAPST, entitled *Deux Gentilshommes-Poètes de la Cour de Henri VIII.* (Paris, 1891), illustrates not only the literary life of the court, but gives an excellent account of the causes which led up to the fall of the Howards in 1547.

The history of the navy may be gathered from D. HANNAY, *A Short History of the English Navy*; H. OPPENHEIM, *A History of*

the Administration of the Royal Navy and of the Merchant Shipping in Relation to the Navy, 1506-1660 (London, 1897), most valuable; W. L. CLOWES, *The Royal Navy* (vol. i., 1897); A. SPONT, *The War with France*, 1512-13 (Navy Records Soc., vol. x., 1897), and MARSDEN, *Select Pleas in the Court of Admiralty* (Selden Soc., London, 1894).

Wales has been treated in an excellent monograph by Miss C. A. S. SKEEL, *The Council in the Marches of Wales* (London, 1904). G. T. LAPSLEY has written the authoritative history of the *Palatinate of Durham*. The Tudor policy in Ireland has been expounded with great thoroughness by R. BAGWELL, *Ireland under the Tudors* (3 vols., London, 1885). R. DUNLOP, whose lives of Irish statesmen in the *Dictionary of National Biography* are valuable contributions, unduly minimises the effect of Henry VIII.'s religious policy (see *Owens College Historical Essays*, pp. 279-306, ed. Tout and Tait, 1902). ANDREW LANG'S *History of Scotland*, i. (1900), and P. HUME BROWN'S *History of Scotland*, i. (1899), adequately reveal the craft and duplicity of Henry's foreign policy, and provide the necessary bibliographical information on Anglo-Scottish relations. The *Hamilton Papers* (2 vols., 1890-92), the most important original source for its later phases, are calendared in the *Letters and Papers*.

Histories of the Reign.—The *Life and Reign of Henry VIII.*, by LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY (London, 1649, reprinted in KENNETT'S *Complete History of England*, vol. ii., 1706), is still a valuable work, built upon solid research, as the notes preserved in the Jesus College MSS. amply testify. The speeches are for the most part literary exercises, and almost all the material used by the author is now well known. The work, however, will always maintain an interest, partly as preserving some pieces of knowledge, for which no earlier authority survives, and partly for the skill and power of its composition. Of more modern accounts the most brilliant is J. A. FROUDE'S *History of England*, which opens with the meeting of the reformation parliament in 1529. Full of admirable research and political insight, the four volumes devoted to the reign of Henry VIII. are still the best general picture of the times, and this despite the fact that the author is a strong protestant, that he apologises for the acts of the government even where they are most indefensible, that he misreads nearly all the Scottish policy of the crown, and takes the preambles of acts of parliament as statements of scientific truth. The chapter devoted to the Pilgrimage of Grace is an example of all that is best, that devoted to Anne Boleyn's execution is a model of all that is worst in this great book, which combines a wide and

APP. I. firm grasp of the general lines of policy at home and abroad with some small errors of detail, and a good deal of serious misconstruction wherever the honour and reputation of the king are at stake. J. S. BREWER'S *Reign of Henry VIII.* (2 vols., London, 1884) is a republication of the author's brilliant prefaces to the first four volumes of the *Letters and Papers*. Here is to be found the great eulogy of Wolsey, the full scope of whose diplomatic activity the author was the first to disinter, and the most ample and trustworthy account of the earlier part of the reign. Dr. JAMES GAIRDNER, who succeeded Brewer as editor of the *Calendar*, was directed to confine his prefaces to the later volumes within narrower limits, and contents himself with giving a clear and concise summary of the main points of historical interest in the volumes under consideration. The best short history of the reign is A. F. POLLARD'S *Henry VIII.* (published with beautiful illustrations in the Goupil series, 1902; republished, with references, 1905). The book is clear, learned, forcible, written from the protestant standpoint, but at the same time most damaging to the king. His conclusions should be compared with those of J. GAIRDNER, who contributes the biography of Henry VIII. to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and two chapters to the *Cambridge Modern History* (vol. i., c. vii., and vol. ii., c. xiii.). Two books stand out from among the Church histories, R. W. DIXON'S *History of the Church of England* (1878-81), and J. GAIRDNER, *The English Church in the Sixteenth Century* (1902). Dixon's work is written with great force, eloquence, and knowledge from the high Anglican standpoint. Gairdner's book is a cold and critical survey of the facts written by the highest authority on the period: its merits are knowledge, accuracy, good critical bibliographies at the end of the chapters, and an admirable map illustrating the dissolution of the monasteries to which special acknowledgment must here be made; its defect is a seeming inability to recognise that there was any popular spiritual impulse behind the reformation. J. H. BLUNT'S *History of the Reformation of the Church of England* is a careful work on a lower intellectual plane.

APPENDIX II.

THE DISPOSITION OF THE MONASTIC LANDS.

APP. II.

DR. ALEXANDER SAVINE, of Moscow University, who has made a thorough study of the calendar of grants in the *Letters and Papers* and of the treasury accounts of the exchequer augmentation office, has generously placed the results of his laborious researches at my disposal. The table printed below is compiled from the grants made in the reign of Henry VIII., excluding grants relating to Welsh monasteries, friaries, hospitals, and colleges. The grantees designated as "uncertain" are those concerning whose status nothing is known save that they are often called *milites*, *armigeri*, *generosi*, knights, esquires, and gentlemen. Every grantee has been included in the group which is most characteristic of him. Thus Norfolk is counted as a peer, though he might be classified as a courtier, a

GRANTEES.	Gift.	Gift and Sale.	Gift and Exchange.	Gift, Sale, Exchange.	No consideration stated.	Sale.	Exchange.	Sale and Exchange.	Money Paid.	Number of Grantees.	Number of Grants.	Approximate Yearly Value.
									£			£
Corporations spiritual	2	—	1	—	26	3	20	3	1,620	—	55	20,000
" lay	—	1	—	—	4	9	—	—	5,980	—	14	1,000
Peers	8	6	2	—	42	34	14	18	53,500	38	124	16,000
Courtiers	14	6	—	—	47	96	10	10	63,000	93	183	7,000
Crown officials	6	2	—	2	13	41	3	6	35,300	32	73	3,500
Augmentations	3	3	—	—	8	82	3	11	71,100	36	110	5,500
New courts	—	1	—	—	4	38	1	—	22,600	23	44	1,500
King's servants	8	1	—	1	6	48	3	7	33,500	46	74	3,500
Lawyers	—	—	—	—	3	35	1	3	20,000	21	42	1,500
Physicians	—	—	—	—	1	17	1	1	8,600	11	20	500
Clerks	—	—	—	—	1	8	—	1	3,950	8	10	500
Yeomen	—	1	—	—	—	10	—	—	2,720	11	11	
Industrials	—	—	—	—	2	134	—	4	97,700	861	140	6,000
Uncertain	—	—	1	—	31	631	5	25	359,630	531-606	693	23,500
Total	41	21	4	3	188	1186	61	89	779,200	936-1011	1593	90,000

[1] Without the grantees of the nineteen grants "*civibus London*".

APP. II.

crown official or an official of the court of augmentations. Most of the courtiers and crown officials might also be described as country gentlemen.

Dr. Savine adds a list of the largest grantees, each of whom received monastic lands worth more than £200 yearly.

Peers.—Essex (T. Cromwell), Norfolk, Rutland, Audeley, Wriothesley, Hertford, Suffolk, Shrewsbury (George and Francis), St. John, Russell, Lisle (J. Dudley), Wharton, Clinton, Sussex, Howard.

Commoners.—Sir R. Rich, Sir T. Pope, Sir E. North, Sir J. Williams, Richard and Robert Southwell, all of the augmentation office; Sir Richard Cromwell, Sir P. Hobby, gentlemen of the privy chamber; Sir Ralph Sadler, king's secretary; Sir Anthony Brown, master of the horse and captain of the gentlemen pensioners; Sir Thomas Cheyney, treasurer of the king's household and warden of the Cinque Ports; Sir Thomas and Sir Arthur Darcy, Sir Thomas Seymour, Sir Richard Long, gentleman of the privy chamber; Richard Andrewes of Hailes, Gloucestershire; Richard, Robert and Roger Taverner; William, John, and Richard Gresham; J. Bellow of Grimsby and J. Broxholme of London; Sir Robert Hill, alderman of London in 1541, lord mayor in 1549; W. Sharington, page and groom of the king's robes; W. Ramsden of Longley, Yorks; the Tyrwhitts, king's servants. The largest purchaser in the reign was Sir R. Gresham, who in October, 1540, bought the domains of three Yorkshire monasteries for £11,137. It will be observed that very few humble people were among the original grantees. On the other hand, there was an extremely brisk speculation in land during the last decade of the reign, many people buying licences to alienate a few days after they had received a grant; and consequently the original grants throw more light upon the comparative power of different classes of men at the time than upon the permanent results of the suppression.

If we calculate the clear income of the English monasteries, leaving out friaries, colleges, hospitals, chantries, and guilds, at something like £135,000 in 1535, it will be seen that two-thirds of the land had been alienated outright by 1547. A great part of that which remained was let out on lease. Thus in Northumberland, as Mr. J. C. Hodgson kindly informs me, "the bulk of the monastic lands seems to have been let under lease at a moderate or small reserved rent, the lessee paying an adequate fine on the granting or renewal of a lease". As the dissolving statutes established twenty-one years as the maximum duration of a crown lease, while the monastic leases were often given for sixty or more years, fines

were paid more frequently under the new than under the old *régime*. Dr. Savine reports that "the rents of the lessees went up, though not very much, under the crown management". It would have been strange if the condition of lessees and tenants had not been unfavourably affected by the great decade of speculation. But comparison of conditions before and after the dissolution should not be used as evidence that the abbot was a more lenient landlord than his lay neighbour before the old order was attacked. This contention is on the whole probably true, but it cannot be established by statistics.

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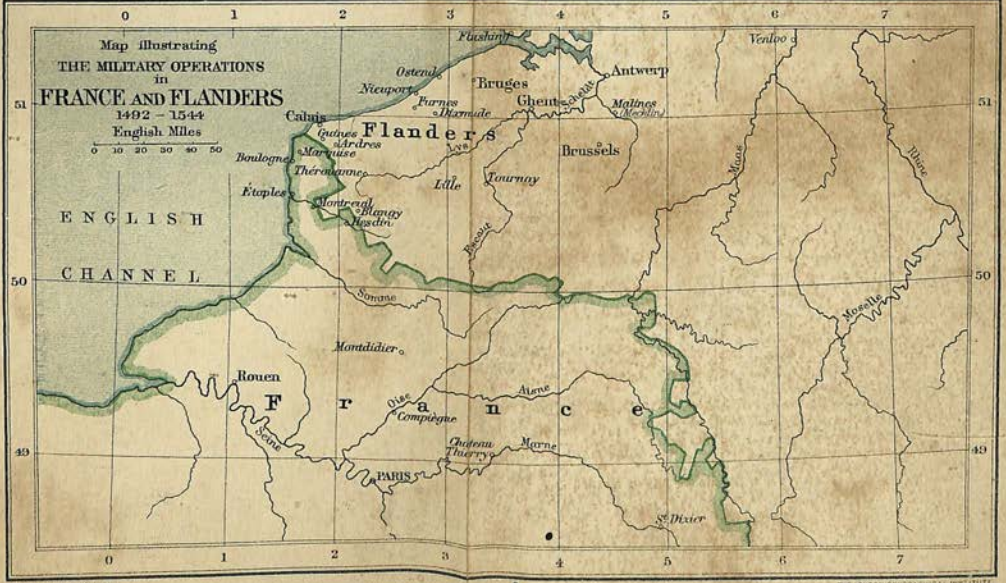

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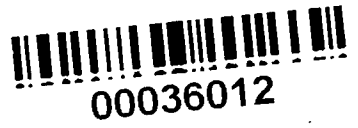
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